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Assertive dominance and rhetorical integration in tiktok affiliate discourse: a pragmatic-rhetorical study of digital persuasion

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the pragmatic strategies of digital persuasion in TikTok Affiliate content, addressing a gap in speech act research on creator-based advertising discourse. A corpus of 166 utterances from 15 videos by three Indonesian creators was analyzed using Searle's (1976) taxonomy and Aristotle's rhetorical framework. Findings reveal three key patterns: (1) assertive speech acts dominate (72.89%), particularly 'mentioning specifications' (38.55%), reflecting a 'trust-first' persuasion logic; (2) logos (60.24%), pathos (25.90%), and ethos (13.86%) operate complementarily within single utterances, not in separate segments; and (3) a consistent illocutionary-rhetorical matrix shows that 'claiming' is paradoxically grounded in ethos (50%) rather than logos, indicating that personal credibility substitutes objective data in this genre. This pragmatic-rhetorical integration, which is more concentrated than in conventional advertising, constitutes the genre's distinctive adaptive response to short-video constraints. Theoretically, the study extends speech act classification to the underexplored domain of affiliate marketing discourse. The findings offer a structured framework for analyzing persuasive language in digital media, with potential applications in educational contexts where critical digital literacy is emphasized.



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Introduction

Short-form video platforms have emerged as the fastest-growing advertising medium in the global digital marketing ecosystem, fundamentally transforming how brands communicate with consumers and how persuasive discourse is constructed in digital spaces (Barta et al., 2023; Fang et al., 2025). In Indonesia, according to a Statista report (2024), the number of TikTok users reached 157.6 million in July 2024, positioning Indonesia as the country with the largest TikTok user base globally. This unprecedented growth is significantly driven by the TikTok Affiliate monetization scheme, a program enabling creators to sell products through integrated shopping cart links and earn commissions from each transaction. Unlike conventional advertisements characterized by formal, structured, and institutionally produced messaging, TikTok Affiliate content is presented in a familiar, everyday conversational style that appears spontaneous and authentic (Chen et al., 2023; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Behind this carefully constructed impression of spontaneity, however, lies a sophisticated linguistic strategy that has yet to be extensively examined from a pragmatic and rhetorical perspective, particularly within the Indonesian context.

Pragmatic studies of advertising discourse have evolved considerably from conventional broadcast and print media to digital platforms, yet significant theoretical and empirical gaps persist. In the realm of conventional advertising, Inderasari et al. (2021) examined linguistic style in public service radio advertisements in Surakarta, finding that the insertion of advertising messages within personal narratives correlates with higher audience acceptance. Similarly, Sinaga et al. (2024) analyzed collaborative illocutionary speech acts in television product advertisements produced by PT. Sinar Sosro, identifying diverse patterns of directive and assertive speech acts in formally scripted advertising discourse. These foundational studies established that conventional advertising relies on institutionally sanctioned scripts where the advertiser's identity and commercial intent are explicit and uncontested.

The expansion of advertising research to digital platforms has revealed increasingly complex patterns of persuasion. Layaliya and Santoso (2022) investigated illocutionary speech acts in Spotify advertisement discourse, demonstrating that audio-based digital platforms require different persuasive strategies than visual media, with suggestive and inviting speech acts dominating due to the auditory-only medium constraints. Zahirah and Ramdhani (2023) analyzed locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary speech acts in YouTube advertisements, finding that assertive speech acts, particularly stating and informing, predominate in video-based advertising content. Extending this line of inquiry, Ardiyanti et al. (2022) examined perlocutionary speech acts in Tokopedia advertisements featuring the K-pop group BTS, explicitly linking their findings to advertising text learning materials in junior high schools, thereby demonstrating the pedagogical relevance of digital advertising discourse analysis.

At the international level, Wang et al. (2023) demonstrated through a speech act theory framework that the illocutionary design of social commerce content particularly assertive and directive speech acts directly influences consumer purchasing behavior on platforms where audiences are already shopping-oriented. Their findings established that different illocutionary strategies yield measurably different engagement and conversion outcomes. Chen et al. (2023) analyzed the speech act structures and move patterns of YouTube influencer marketing videos, revealing that assertiveness, particularly in the form of experiential claims and product recommendations, dominates the discourse of video creators who construct their authority through personal experience narratives rather than institutional credentials. Ma et al. (2024) further extended this line of research by examining live video hosts' speech acts in Chinese e-commerce live streaming, discovering that representative (assertive) and expressive acts negatively impact direct purchases while commissive acts positively influence buying behavior a finding that underscores the context-dependent nature of persuasive speech act effectiveness.

Villarroel Ordenes et al. (2019) employed speech act and image act analysis to examine social media brand messages, demonstrating that different combinations of speech acts and visual elements drive distinct consumer sharing behaviors, with assertive speech acts generating the highest levels of engagement when combined with informational visuals. Ludwig and De Ruyter (2016) established a speech act theory research agenda for decoding social media communication, arguing that traditional pragmatic frameworks require adaptation to account for the hybrid, multimodal, and participatory nature of digital discourse. Hyland (2017) examined metadiscourse in online advertising, revealing that digital persuasion operates through more explicit interpersonal positioning than conventional advertising, as creators must simultaneously establish credibility, engage audiences, and direct action within compressed temporal and spatial constraints. Al-Subhi (2022) analyzed linguistic and visual metadiscourse in social media advertisements, demonstrating that digital advertising discourse combines multiple modes of persuasion in ways that traditional pragmatic frameworks, developed primarily for spoken or written monologic texts, do not fully capture.

Despite this substantial body of research, significant theoretical and empirical gaps remain. All of the studies cited above analyzed advertisements produced institutionally (television, radio, Spotify), by brands on e-commerce platforms (Tokopedia, social commerce sites), or by creators on platforms where audiences are already in shopping-oriented consumption modes (YouTube shopping videos, e-commerce live streams). Critically, no study has yet analyzed the discourse of TikTok Affiliate creators operating within the personal-experience-based advertising genre that reaches audiences primarily seeking entertainment rather than shopping opportunities. This distinction is not merely a matter of different platform contexts but represents a fundamentally different communicative situation that challenges conventional speech act theory in three ways.

First, conventional speech act theory, as articulated by Searle (1976) and Austin (1962), assumes that speech acts occur within relatively stable communicative contexts where speaker intentions, hearer expectations, and institutional frameworks are clearly defined. However, TikTok Affiliate discourse operates in what may be termed a "hybrid illocutionary space" where creators simultaneously fulfill dual roles as consumers sharing authentic personal experiences and as commercial agents promoting products for financial gain. This dual identity creates inherent tensions in illocutionary force assignment: when a creator states "I've been using this product for six months," is this an assertive speech act of claiming based on genuine experience or a strategic

performance of authenticity designed to build ethos and ultimately drive purchasing behavior? The ambiguity is not incidental but constitutive of the genre itself, as Sokolova and Kefi (2020) demonstrated through their analysis of parasocial interaction and credibility in influencer marketing. This phenomenon what we term "planned authenticity" represents a form of persuasive discourse not fully captured by Searle's (1976) taxonomy, which assumes sincerity conditions that are systematically exploited and deliberately blurred in digital influencer advertising (Chen et al., 2023; Fang et al., 2025).

Second, the conventional distinction between assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative speech acts becomes problematic when applied to TikTok Affiliate discourse because utterances frequently perform multiple illocutionary functions simultaneously. For example, a creator's warning that "I'm afraid it might not be on sale tomorrow it's only 70,000 IDR right now" functions as an assertive (stating a concern), a directive (implicitly urging purchase), and an expressive (conveying affective anxiety) simultaneously. The integration of multiple illocutionary forces within single utterances, combined with the rhetorical techniques of logos, pathos, and ethos (Braet, 1992; Perloff, 2020), reflects what Belanche et al. (2021) identified as the "congruence" required in influencer marketing, where content must simultaneously entertain, inform, and persuade within highly compressed temporal constraints (typically 15-60 seconds). This condensed illocutionary density challenges the traditional speech act classification framework, which was developed primarily for analyzing isolated utterances in relatively extended conversational contexts (Searle, 1976; Wijana & Rohmadi, 2011).

Third, the fundamental pragmatic distinction between entertainment-oriented and shopping-oriented platforms has been undertheorized in previous research. Wang et al. (2023) and Ma et al. (2024) analyzed speech acts on platforms where audiences have already activated shopping intentions (social commerce sites, e-commerce live streams), identifying speech act patterns optimized for conversion from active buyers. However, TikTok Affiliate creators must first transform entertainment-seeking audiences into receptive consumers before any purchase directive can be effective a fundamentally different pragmatic task that requires different speech act strategies and different rhetorical configurations. Fang et al. (2025) found that speech act strategies vary significantly across different influencer types and platform contexts, with informative assertiveness dominating on platforms where credibility is paramount, while expressiveness and pathos-dominated discourse prevail in entertainment-oriented contexts. This platform-based pragmatic variation has not been systematically examined through an integrated speech act and rhetorical framework, nor has it been connected to pedagogical applications in language education, despite the demonstrated value of authentic audiovisual materials for developing pragmatic competence (Omar & Razi, 2022).

The significance of this gap is amplified by the demographic reality that Generation Z students in Indonesia consume TikTok content daily, often without the linguistic analysis skills needed to recognize the persuasive strategies operating behind the carefully constructed impression of authentic personal recommendation (Tafesse & Wood, 2021). Research by Barta et al. (2023) on TikTok influencer marketing effectiveness demonstrated that the platform's unique combination of entertainment, authenticity, and commercial content creates a persuasive environment where traditional advertising literacy skills are insufficient. Students require explicit instruction in identifying the linguistic mechanisms of persuasion in digital advertising discourse to develop the critical literacy necessary for navigating contemporary media environments. The Indonesian language curriculum for junior high school, as established in the Phase D Learning Outcomes (Decision of the Head of BSKAP No. 032/H/KR/2024), explicitly includes competencies in analyzing and producing advertising texts, including identifying and writing persuasive and imperative sentences direct manifestations of the assertive and directive speech acts that dominate digital advertising discourse. TikTok Affiliate content, with its high density of persuasive speech acts and systematic integration of rhetorical techniques, offers an authentic and contextually relevant resource for developing these competencies (Ardiyanti et al., 2022; Susanti et al., 2021).

Based on this comprehensive gap analysis and theoretical reconstruction, this study formulates three research questions: (1) What forms of persuasive speech acts do TikTok Affiliate creators use within the entertainment-oriented platform context? (2) Which rhetorical techniques are effective in these utterances, and what is the pattern of interconnection between speech acts and rhetorical techniques in this hybrid persuasive genre? (3) How can the results of this analysis be utilized as a learning resource for advertising texts in junior high schools, aligning with the Phase D Learning Outcomes of the Merdeka Curriculum?

The novelty of this study lies in three interrelated contributions. First, it applies Searle's (1976) integrated speech act framework and Aristotelian rhetorical framework (Braet, 1992; Perloff, 2020) to the genre of creator-based digital advertising discourse that operates in an entertainment-first context a genre not previously examined in Indonesian language pragmatics research. Second, it develops and operationalizes the concept of "planned authenticity" as a pragmatic construct that captures the deliberate construction of spontaneous, personal narratives as strategic persuasive discourse in digital advertising. Third, it systematically maps the

interrelationship between speech act forms and rhetorical techniques, providing an analytical framework that can be directly applied to advertising text learning in junior high schools, thereby bridging the gap between linguistic research and pedagogical practice. This tripartite contribution addresses the theoretical, empirical, and practical dimensions of the research gap identified above, moving beyond merely incremental geographic extension to a genuine conceptual contribution to the understanding of persuasive discourse in hybrid digital environments.

Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze patterns of persuasive speech acts and rhetorical techniques in TikTok Affiliate content (Moleong, 2019; Sudaryanto, 2015). The unit of analysis is a single utterance defined as a statement with an identifiable illocutionary function oriented toward influencing audience attitudes or behavior toward the advertised product (Searle, 1976; Wijana & Rohmadi, 2011). To ensure operational clarity, utterance boundaries are determined through three explicit criteria: (1) syntactic unity, where a grammatically complete clause or clause series bound by a single performative verb constitutes one unit; (2) intonational-prosodic unity, identified through pauses, intonation contours, and turn-taking markers in verbatim transcription; and (3) pragmatic coherence, where the primary illocutionary force is determined by the speaker's most salient communicative intention inferred from contextual cues and illocutionary force indicating devices (Austin, 1962; Leech, 1983; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). For multifunctional utterances, the predominant function is identified through a two-round coding procedure with a two-week interval; discrepancies are resolved through consensus discussion between researchers, ensuring inter-coder reliability (Moleong, 2019; Sudaryanto, 2015). Data sources comprise 15 TikTok Affiliate videos from three purposively selected creators—Hendra Setyo, Koh Dennies, and Kohcun (five videos each)—representing diversity in delivery styles (narrative-personal, demonstrative-technical, and concise-review) validated through theoretical categories derived from influencer marketing literature (Belanche et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2023; Fang et al., 2025). From 15 videos, 166 utterances were obtained (70 from Hendra Setyo, 56 from Koh Dennies, 40 from Kohcun). Data collection employs non-participant observation through four stages: repeated viewing, utterance selection based on persuasive content criteria (excluding opening greetings), verbatim transcription preserving colloquial features, and contextual documentation of multimodal elements (Sudaryanto, 2015; Villarroel Ordenes et al., 2019).

Speech act analysis applies the distributional method with substitution and expansion techniques to identify illocutionary functions based on inherent linguistic criteria (Sudaryanto, 2015; Wijana & Rohmadi, 2011). Substitution tests each utterance by replacing content while maintaining syntactic form to determine if illocutionary force remains consistent; expansion adds explicit performative verbs to confirm underlying speech act categories (Searle, 1976). Rhetorical technique analysis employs the pragmatic matching method, aligning utterance content with operational indicators of logos (technical data, numerical evidence, product specifications), pathos (emotional appeals, urgency markers, fear/regret framing), and ethos (personal experience claims, sincerity markers, parasocial relationship indicators) as formulated by Perloff (2020) and Braet (1992). Both analyses follow two-round coding with inter-coder reliability checks (Cohen's Kappa: speech acts $\kappa=0.87$, rhetoric $\kappa=0.84$) and consensus resolution for discrepancies (Moleong, 2019). Pedagogical implications are examined through alignment analysis with Phase D Learning Outcomes (BSKAP No. 032/H/KR/2024) and 8th-grade advertising text teaching modules, following the approach of Ardiyanti et al. (2022) and Susanti et al. (2021). Data validity is ensured through source triangulation (three creators) and methodological triangulation (combining distributional and pragmatic matching methods) (Moleong, 2019; Sudaryanto, 2015). Frequency distributions are presented as data trend illustrations, not claims of statistical representativeness, prioritizing depth of description and theoretical insight over generalizability (Chen et al., 2023; Fang et al., 2025).

Results and Discussions

Forms of Persuasive Speech Acts in TikTok Affiliate Content

An analysis of 166 utterances identified three types of persuasive speech acts. Their distribution is presented in Table 1, and details of the eight forms are in Table 2.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Persuasive Speech Acts in TikTok Affiliate Content (N=166)

Type of Speech Act	Frequency	Percentage
Assertive	121	72.89%
Directive	33	19.88%
Expressive	12	7.23%
Total	166	100%

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Sub-forms of Persuasive Speech Acts in TikTok Affiliate Content (N=166)

Type	Form	Frequency	Percentage
Assertive	Stating	22	13.25%
	Claiming	28	16.87%
	Mentioning	64	38.55%
	Warning	7	4.22%
Total Assertive		121	72.89%
Directive	Suggesting	15	9.04%
	Inviting	8	4.82%
	Commanding	10	6.02%
Total Directives		33	19.88%
Expressive	Praising	12	7.23%
Total Expressive		12	7.23%
Total		166	100

Table 1 shows the dominance of the assertive form (72.89%). The absence of the commissive and declarative forms is consistent with the TikTok Affiliate context: creators do not make measurable promises (commissive) and do not have the institutional authority to change status through speech acts (declarative) (Searle, 1976; Wang et al., 2023). Table 2 details the eight forms of persuasive speech acts that constitute the main findings of this study. Mentioning dominates the assertive sub-forms (38.55%), followed by claiming (16.87%), stating (13.25%), and warning (4.22%). In directives, suggesting was the most common (9.04%), followed by commanding (6.02%) and inviting (4.82%).

Assertive Speech Acts

Assertiveness is realized in four speech acts, each of which performs a different persuasive function.

Stating

The creator positions himself as an ordinary consumer, not a seller. This strategy conveys the product's popularity as social proof while minimizing persuasive resistance because the audience feels they have the freedom to decide for themselves.

"Since so many people are buying this bathroom shelf, I'm jumping on the bandwagon too, guys." (Hendra Setyo)

Claiming

The marker 'seriously' and comparative numbers ('out of 5', 'more than 6 months') function as a guarantee of illocutionary commitment: the creator stakes their reputation as proof of the claim while simultaneously building ethos within a single sentence (Braet, 1992; Fang et al., 2025). This pattern of experiential claiming has been identified by Chen et al. (2023) as characteristic of successful influencer marketing on video platforms.

"Seriously, out of the 5 fan coolers I own, this Gamen GMR06 fan cooler cools down the fastest." (Hendra Setyo)

Mentioning

What's interesting isn't just the specifications mentioned, but their order, which implicitly addresses different audience segments sequentially. Perloff (2020) notes that relevance to the target segment determines the

effectiveness of logos more than the mere completeness of data. Wang et al. (2023) similarly found that detailed product specifications in social commerce content significantly enhance purchase intentions.

"It can charge an iPhone with 20-watt power delivery and support 25-watt fast charging for Android." (Koh Dennies)

Warning

In terms of form, this utterance is assertive, but its perlocutionary force is close to that of a directive. The construction *"I'm afraid there won't be a promotion tomorrow"* shifts the concern onto the audience, so that the pressure to act feels as though it comes from within the audience itself, rather than from the creator (Perloff, 2020). This is the clearest example of the indirect persuasive nature characteristic of the TikTok Affiliate genre: the most effective persuasion is precisely the kind that feels least like persuasion (Ludwig & De Ruyter, 2016; Villarroel Ordenes et al., 2019).

"Since it's on sale today, I'm afraid it might not be on sale tomorrow it's only 70,000 IDR right now." (Hendra Setyo)

Directive Speech Acts

Directives manifest in three forms, each operating at a different point in the audience's persuasive journey.

Suggesting

Mentioning specific segments of FPS game fans and users of a certain height creates high personal relevance: audiences who feel they belong to that group respond more strongly because the conversation feels personal, not mass-market (Belanche et al., 2021; Tafesse & Wood, 2021). This targeted suggesting strategy has been identified by Fang et al. (2025) as particularly effective for niche product marketing.

"Especially for those who like to play high-FPS games like PUBG, use this and you won't have to worry about FPS drops because your phone overheats." (Hendra Setyo)

"If you're 175 cm tall, I highly recommend using this chair." (Kohcun)

Inviting

Seven words packed with pragmatic power: the creator simultaneously builds a logos (affordable price) and inserts pathos in the form of the emotional fear of loss. Perloff (2020) explains that loss-framing is more effective at driving action than equivalent gain-framing, because the psychological fear of loss feels more significant than the hope of gain. This finding is consistent with Ma et al.'s (2024) study on live streaming speech acts, which found that loss-framed directives significantly increased purchase behavior.

"At this price, if you don't buy it, you're the one losing out." (Koh Dennies)

Commanding

The particle 'just' softens the imperative nature into a suggestion that doesn't feel coercive. Imperative directives work most effectively as simplifiers of execution steps rather than as pressure, as they appear after the audience has already been persuaded through a series of assertive statements and previous rhetorical techniques (Leech, 1983; Wang et al., 2023).

"Just check the bottom left corner for the price." (Kohcun)

Expressive Speech Acts

Expressive speech acts are realized in one form: praise (12 utterances, 7.23%).

Praising

The words 'ngeri' and 'segila ini,' which have negative connotations, function as markers of intense admiration in the informal register of Indonesian youth a sociolinguistic adaptation (adaptasi sosiolinguistik) that strengthens the creator's connection with their audience while reinforcing personal credibility.

"It's crazy, man, crazy. You've got to see it local products are now this good and this wild." (Koh Dennies)

Discussion of Persuasive Speech Acts

Assertive dominance (72.89%) reflects the distinctive persuasive logic of TikTok Affiliates. Unlike creators on platforms where the audience is already shopping-oriented, TikTok Affiliate creators reach their audience in an entertainment context; therefore, narrative- and argument-based assertiveness must come first before directives can be effective. Interestingly, among assertive forms, mentioning product specifications (38.55%) is actually the most dominant, surpassing making claims (16.87%) and stating (13.25%). This finding suggests that TikTok Affiliate creators do not merely rely on subjective claims but instead flood the audience with concrete technical information as the foundation of their persuasive arguments.

This dominance of assertive language also reflects a strategy referred to in this study as "planned authenticity": creators construct narratives as if their recommendations were expressions of honest personal

experience, while in reality they contain a carefully designed persuasive structure. This term refers to the phenomenon where the impression of authenticity in a creator's speech is the result of meticulous pragmatic planning. Inderasari et al. (2021) found a similar pattern in radio advertisements: the insertion of advertising messages within narratives that feel personal correlates with higher audience acceptance. In TikTok Affiliate, this strategy is more complex because creators fulfill two roles simultaneously: a consumer sharing experiences and a marketing agent working in the brand's interest.

A crucial comparative perspective is provided by Ma et al. (2024), who found that in Chinese e-commerce live streaming, representative acts (assertive) and expressive acts have a negative impact on direct purchases, while commissive acts have a positive impact. This contrast is not a contradiction: in structured live streams with an audience already in shopping mode, commissive acts (direct offers) are more efficient. In TikTok Affiliate content targeting an entertainment audience, narrative-based assertive speech acts are actually a more appropriate entry point. This difference confirms that the effectiveness of each type of speech act depends on the medium's context and audience characteristics, not solely on the creator's follower count.

Rhetorical Techniques in TikTok Affiliate Content

An analysis of rhetorical techniques yielded the distribution shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Dominant Rhetorical Techniques in TikTok Affiliate Content (N=166)

Rhetorical Technique	Frequency	Percentage
Logos	100	60.24%
Pathos	43	25.90%
Ethos	23	13.86%
Total	166	100

Table 3 shows the distribution of dominant rhetorical techniques per utterance: each utterance is classified based on the most prominent technique, although in practice a single utterance often contains more than one technique. Logos dominates (60.24%), followed by pathos (25.90%) and ethos (13.86%). Ethos, which is quantitatively the least frequent, is actually a structural prerequisite for logos and pathos to be accepted as credible communication.

Logos

Logos come in two main forms: arguments based on technical specifications and value comparisons.

"It can charge an iPhone with 20-watt power delivery and can also fast-charge Android devices at 25 watts." (Koh Dennies)

"Simple it can charge both an iPhone and an Android device at the same time. It's fast charging, too." (Hendra Setyo)

Specific technical data is logos in its purest form. Number-based arguments create the perception that the creator has real knowledge of the product's beneficial effects, even though the audience may not necessarily understand the technical meaning of every number.

"Yesterday I saw it at the mall; the price was around 200,000 to 250,000." (Hendra Setyo)

The creator does not explicitly claim that the price is cheap; instead, they present a factual point of comparison and leave the assessment to the audience. Braet (1992) identifies this strategy as an enthymeme an argument left unresolved by the speaker, allowing the audience to draw their own conclusions. Conclusions drawn from within feel more convincing than explicit claims.

Pathos

Pathos is present through two main patterns: the creation of a sense of urgency regarding time or stock, and the evocation of anticipated regret.

The creator projects a sense of regret into the audience's future, where they imagine themselves regretting having missed the promotion. Anticipatory regret has a stronger driving force than a direct call to action because it works from within the audience, not from the outside.

"Hurry up, guys, don't end up regretting it if the price changes, because this is while the promotion is still on." (Hendra Setyo)

This statement incorporates two techniques at once: the urgency of scarcity and social proof that the product has previously sold out. The phrase "I'm buying it" indirectly reinforces the creator's ethos positioning themselves not merely as a promoter, but as a consumer who has personally verified the product's value.

"Don't let this sell out again, wow, I'm buying it." (Kohcun)

Ethos

Although the least common in terms of quantity, ethos determines whether logos and pathos can be accepted as credible communication.

"I once sat in a 3-million-rupiah chair that made my tailbone hurt so bad, and I ended up going to the doctor, guys. Now I don't dare just pick any chair anymore." (Kohcun)

"The reason I recommend this power bank: first, it's affordable, and the Rapatek brand has proven to be high-quality." (Koh Dennies)

Both narratives open with the creator's past negative experiences or failures, suggesting they have no interest in defending the product from the outset. Braet (1992) identifies character-based ethos and real-life experiences as the most difficult instruments of persuasion to fake, as they require long-term narrative consistency. Creators who consistently employ a personal-experience-based ethos build a more loyal audience community than those who rely solely on technical specifications.

Discussion of Rhetorical Techniques

The most significant finding is not the dominance of logos, but rather how the three work complementarily within a single piece of content. TikTok Affiliate content condenses all three techniques into every utterance an adaptation to the constraints of short video duration that forces creators to maximize the persuasive function of every sentence.

The dominance of logos (60.24%) requires critical analysis. The technical data mentioned by creators cannot always be verified by the audience in real-time; this creates an information asymmetry that benefits the creator while confirming that the choice of illocution is a strategic decision: creators who choose to mention concrete specifications build a perception of credibility far more effectively than those who merely make general claims of superiority. Implications for learning: the ability to recognize and evaluate logos claims in digital advertisements needs to be explicitly developed so that students do not simply accept claims they cannot verify. It is this very condition that makes TikTok Affiliate content valuable as an authentic learning resource: it exposes persuasive strategies in their true complexity something that cannot be obtained from simplified advertising examples in textbooks.

The Relationship Between Speech Acts and Rhetorical Techniques

To address the second part of the second research question, the analysis continued by mapping the relationship between the eight speech act forms and the three rhetorical techniques. Table 4 presents this relationship matrix.

Table 4. Matrix of the Relationship Between Speech Acts and Rhetorical Techniques in TikTok Affiliate Content (N=166)

Speech Act Form	Logos	Pathos	Ethos	Total
Stating	5	9	8	22
Claiming	11	3	14	28
Mentioning	64	0	0	64
Warning	0	7	0	7
Suggesting	12	3	0	15
Inviting	0	7	1	8
Commanding	8	2	0	10
Praising	0	12	0	12
Total	100	43	23	166
Percentage	60.24%	25.90%	13.86%	100%

Table 4 four consistent patterns of interrelation. First, mentioning (64 utterances) entirely overlaps with logos because specifying details constitutes data-based argumentation—there is absolutely no variation. Second, claiming (28 utterances) is actually dominated by ethos (14) rather than logos (11)—the most original finding in this study. Theoretically, claims should be propositional and data-based (logos); however, creators instead reinforce their claims with the authority of personal experience (*"seriously, out of the 5 I have," "I've been using it for 6 months"*). This indicates that in the TikTok Affiliate genre, personal credibility (ethos) replaces objective data

(logos) as the foundation of claims—a shift made possible only by the audience's parasocial trust in the creators, as demonstrated by Sokolova and Kefi (2020) and Belanche et al. (2021). Third, stating (22 utterances) is the most varied form: 9 overlap with pathos (dramatization of experience), 8 with ethos (narration of experience), and 5 with logos (fact-based statements). Fourth, praise (12 utterances) entirely overlaps with pathos (12); none involve logos because its function is to express affective admiration (Fang et al., 2025; Perloff, 2020).

This pattern reveals that speech acts and rhetorical techniques function as an integrated system, not two parallel systems: the choice of illocutionary form already contains a rhetorical decision, and conversely, rhetorical choices limit the types of utterances available (Searle, 1976; Braet, 1992). The creator's utterances, which appear spontaneous, actually reflect internalized pragmatic and rhetorical competence. Wijana and Rohmadi (2011) assert that the choice of speech acts reflects how the speaker positions themselves within the speech event: the selection of the appropriate illocutionary act is part of internalized pragmatic competence and is not always carried out in a conscious-reflective manner.

The findings of this matrix also explain the creator's strategy for managing dual identities: as a consumer sharing experiences and as a promoter with commercial interests (Chen et al., 2023; Fang et al., 2025). Logos-based assertiveness, particularly emphasizing specifications, is how creators build informational authority; ethos-based assertiveness, primarily claiming based on experience, is how they build personal authority. The matrix in Table 4 provides a concrete map of this mechanism—a distinctive contribution of this study's pragmatic-rhetorical integrated approach that distinguishes it from previous speech act analyses, which merely identified types without mapping their rhetorical tendencies (Layaliya & Santoso, 2022; Sinaga et al., 2024).

The theoretical significance of this matrix extends to understanding the relationship between illocutionary force and rhetorical appeal. Drawing on Searle's (1976) classification and Aristotle's rhetorical framework, this integrated analysis reveals that certain speech act forms have inherent rhetorical tendencies: mentioning is structurally logos-oriented, praising is inherently pathos-oriented, and claiming relies heavily on ethos (Braet, 1992; Wang et al., 2023). This suggests that the persuasion process in TikTok Affiliate content operates through what could be termed "rhetorical specialization"—where different illocutionary acts specialize in different rhetorical functions, creating a complementary system of persuasion (Perloff, 2020; Ma et al., 2024).

The matrix also illuminates the temporal sequencing of persuasion strategies. Analysis of utterance order within videos reveals a consistent pattern: mentioning (logos) typically appears in the initial segment, followed by stating (logos/pathos/ethos) and claiming (ethos) in the middle segment, with directives (logos/pathos) and warnings (pathos) appearing in the final segment. This sequencing suggests a rhetorical progression from informational foundation (logos) to credibility establishment (ethos) to emotional motivation (pathos) to behavioral instruction (directives) (Chen et al., 2023; Fang et al., 2025). This pattern is consistent with the "sequence of persuasion" framework proposed by Perloff (2020) and extends it to the digital short-form advertising context.

Utilizing Research Findings as a Learning Resource for Advertising Texts in Junior High School

Relevance of Findings to Learning Outcomes for Advertising Texts in Junior High School

The findings of this study align structurally with the Learning Outcomes (LO) for Phase D of the Merdeka Curriculum, as established by BSKAP Head Decision No. 032/H/KR/2024. The advertising text, slogan, and poster materials in 8th-grade junior high school specifically include competencies in analyzing and producing advertising texts, including writing persuasive and imperative sentences direct manifestations of the assertive and directive speech acts that dominate these findings. The Reading and Viewing as well as Writing elements are fulfilled simultaneously: TikTok Affiliate content is authentic audiovisual text that can be analyzed and used as a model for production. Ardiyanti et al. (2022) emphasize that social media-based advertising texts are pedagogically relevant when directly linked to measurable learning objectives a principle fulfilled through the framework of the eight speech act forms and the interrelationship map in Table 4.

Omar and Razi (2022), through an experimental study involving 42 EFL students, demonstrated that authentic audiovisual clips significantly enhance pragmatic competence compared to printed texts. TikTok Affiliate content meets these criteria and even exhibits a higher density of persuasive speech acts than the film clips typically used. Furthermore, this content operates in a gray zone between information and persuasion, where creators intentionally blur the lines to create a sense of planned authenticity. Analyzing it in the classroom trains students to recognize the mechanisms of persuasion behind language that feels natural a form of critical literacy that cannot be developed solely through simplified textbook advertisements.

Implications for Advertising Text Learning

The results of this study have three interrelated pedagogical implications. The first implication is curricular: the framework of the eight speech act forms and the map of illocutionary-rhetorical relationships in Table 4 can be

integrated into advertising text learning activities as an operational analytical tool. Students are no longer merely directed to 'identify persuasive sentences' in assigned advertisement examples an approach that often yields superficial identifications but are instead guided to identify specific illocutionary acts (mentioning, claiming, inviting) and the rhetorical techniques that underpin them. It is this depth of analysis that substantively not merely formally meets the requirements of the Reading and Viewing elements in Phase D of the Indonesian Language Curriculum.

The second implication is productive: the pattern of assertive-logos as an opener, pathos as a reinforcer, and directive as a closer found in this study can serve as a framework for students to produce advertising texts. Research by Chen et al. (2023) shows that creators who share personal experiences (assertive-ethos) before urging a purchase achieve stronger audience engagement a finding that can be operationalized in classroom advertising production tasks. This framework provides students with structural guidance derived from empirical data, not merely from textbook conventions.

The third and most fundamental implication is paradigmatic: integrating TikTok Affiliate content into learning fosters a shift in students' perspective on advertisements from passively received texts to linguistic constructions that can be analyzed, understood in terms of their mechanisms, and consciously produced. This shift aligns with the orientation of the Indonesian Language CP Phase D, which encourages students to think critically about the texts they consume daily, rather than merely being skilled at producing them. In this context, TikTok Affiliate content is not merely a more contemporary teaching material; it is a medium that structurally integrates linguistic literacy, critical literacy, and digital literacy into a single meaningful learning activity.

Conclusions

This study yields three conclusions that collectively affirm that TikTok Affiliate has established its own distinct advertising discourse genre with unique and mappable pragmatic patterns. First, TikTok Affiliate content contains three types of persuasive speech acts realized in eight forms. The dominance of the assertive mode (72.89%)—particularly mentioning (38.55%) and claiming (16.87%)—reflects a step-by-step logic of persuasion: creators build trust through data-driven arguments and narratives before a purchase directive is presented. The absence of commissives and declarations is consistent with the limited role of creators as promoters without institutional authority (Searle, 1976; Wang et al., 2023). This assertive-dominant pattern differs structurally from conventional advertising genres that have been studied (Inderasari et al., 2021; Sinaga et al., 2024) and reflects the unique communicative context of TikTok Affiliate content (Chen et al., 2023; Fang et al., 2025). Second, logos (60.24%), pathos (25.90%), and ethos (13.86%) operate complementarily throughout a single piece of content, rather than separately in distinct segments. The correlation matrix (Table 4) reveals a consistent pattern: mentioning fully overlaps with logos; stating varies the most as it can depend on pathos (9), ethos (8), or logos (5); praising fully overlaps with pathos alone—not a single instance of praising overlaps with either logos or ethos. Ethos, although the least frequent (13.86%), serves as a functional prerequisite for logos and pathos to be accepted as credible communication (Braet, 1992; Perloff, 2020). This pattern of rhetorical integration, which is more concentrated than in other advertising genres, represents an adaptive response to the constraints of short-form video duration (Chen et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2023). Third, the findings regarding the relationship between speech acts and rhetorical techniques in Table 4 have direct implications as a learning resource for advertising texts in junior high school. This systematic pattern of interrelationships provides an analytical framework that students can use to approach advertising texts in a structured manner (Ardiyanti et al., 2022; Susanti et al., 2021). TikTok Affiliate content has the potential to serve as an authentic and contextual learning resource through three interrelated pedagogical implications: curricular, productive, and paradigmatic (Omar & Razi, 2022; Fatimah & Markhamah, 2023). This content is not only relevant for training students in the comprehension and production of advertising texts but also for developing their critical literacy regarding creator-based persuasion practices that are increasingly dominating the digital space (Hyland, 2017; Al-Subhi, 2022). Theoretically, this study extends the application of Searle's (1976) taxonomy and Aristotle's rhetorical framework to the genre of creator-based digital advertisements. Both frameworks have proven capable of being productively integrated to unpack persuasive strategies simultaneously at the illocutionary and rhetorical levels (Braet, 1992; Perloff, 2020). This integrated analytical framework has the potential to be applied to other genres of digital persuasive discourse, such as product review content and live shopping broadcasts (Chen et al., 2023; Ma et al., 2024). Practically, the relationship map in Table 4 provides an analytical tool that junior high school Indonesian language teachers can immediately use to design text analysis and production activities based on authentic advertising content, bridging linguistic studies with pedagogical practices that have rarely been explicitly connected (Ardiyanti et al., 2022; Susanti et al., 2021). Researchers, instructional material developers, and teachers can use this eight-form speech act framework as a standardized analysis rubric for advertising text materials at the middle school level (Omar & Razi, 2022; Fatimah & Markhamah, 2023). This study has scope

limitations that simultaneously open up directions for further development. The focus on three creators allows for in-depth analysis, but generalization to the entire TikTok Affiliate ecosystem requires a broader corpus. The multimodal dimensions of gestures, facial expressions, and background music have not yet been examined and represent a promising area for research. The proposed framework for application encompassing curricular, This study has scope limitations that simultaneously open up directions for further development. The focus on three creators allows for in-depth analysis, but generalization to the entire TikTok Affiliate ecosystem requires a broader corpus. The multimodal dimensions of gestures, facial expressions, and background music have not yet been examined and represent a promising area for research (Xing & Feng, 2023; Al-Subhi, 2022). The proposed framework for application—encompassing curricular, productive, and paradigmatic implications—already has an empirical foundation from prior research (Ardiyanti et al., 2022; Omar & Razi, 2022); testing its effectiveness through classroom action research is a relevant next step to strengthen the practical contributions of this study.

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