

**COMMUNICATION ACCOMMODATION ANALYSIS OF  
VERBAL CONVERGENCE ON THE TIKTOK ACCOUNT  
“*ENGLISH ON THE STREET*”**

**THESIS**

By:

Lauro’at Hidayatul Faroha

NIM 210302110061



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM  
MALANG  
2026**

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VERBAL CONVERGENCE ON THE TIKTOK ACCOUNT  
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**THESIS**

Present to

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In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
*Sarjana Sastra (S.S.)*

By:

**Lauro’at hidayatul Faroha**

NIM 210302110061

Advisor:

**Mazroatul Ishlahiyah, M.Pd.**

NIP 199107222023212036



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM  
MALANG  
2026**

## STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis I wrote to fulfil the requirement for the Degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S.) entitled "*Communication Accommodation Analysis of Verbal Convergence on the Tiktok Account "English on the Street"*" is truly my original work. It does not incorporate any materials previously written or published by other people, except those indicated in quotation and bibliography. As the only person responsible for this thesis, I will address any objections or claims from others.

Malang, 06 June 2026

The Researcher,



Lauro'at Hidayatul Faroha

NIM 210302110061

## APPROVAL SHEET

It is to certify that Lauro'at Hidayatul Faroha's thesis entitled "*Communication Accommodation Analysis of Verbal Convergence on the Tiktok Account "English on the Street"*" has been approved for thesis examination at the Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, as one of the requirements for the degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S).

Malang, 06 June 2026

Approved by  
Advisor,



Mazroatul Ishlahiyah, M.Pd.  
NIP 199107222023212036

Head Department of English  
Literature



Dr. Agwin Degaf, M.A.  
NIP 198805232015031004

Acknowledged by  
Dean,



M. Faisol, M.Ag.

NIP 197411012003121003

### LEGITIMATION SHEET

It is to certify that Lauro'at Hidayatul Faroha's "*Communication Accommodation Analysis of Verbal Convergence on the Tiktok Account "English on the Street"*" has been approved by the Broad Examiners as the requirement for the degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S) in English Literature Department.

Malang, 06 June 2026

#### Board Of Examiners

1. Mira Shartika, M.A.  
NIP. 197903082023212008
2. Mazroatul Ishlahiyah, M.Pd.  
NIP. 199107222023212036
3. Nur Latifah, M.A.  
NIP. 197706252023212013

#### Signatures

*Mira Shartika*  
*[Signature]*  
*[Signature]*

Approved by  
Dean of Faculty of Humanities



## MOTTO

مَنْ لَمْ يَذُقْ مُرَّ التَّعَلُّمِ سَاعَةً ، تَجَرَّعَ ذُلَّ الْجَهْلِ طُولَ حَيَاتِهِ

— Imam Asy-Syafi'i

*“I’m not saying I’m gonna change the world, but I guarantee that I will spark the  
brain that will change the world”*

— 2Pac Shakur (MTV Interview, 1994)

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is proudly dedicated to my beloved parents, Miftahusysyiroj and Nurul Farihah, for their endless prayers, strength, and support.

To my advisor, Mrs. Mazroatul Ishlahiyah, M.Pd., for her great guidance.

Lastly, I dedicate this to myself for surviving the process, continuing to learn, and refusing to give up.

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I welcome any constructive criticism and suggestions to improve this research. Hopefully, this research will be useful for readers and the development of linguistics.

Malang, 06 June 2026

Lauro'at Hidayatul Faroha

## ABSTRACT

**Faroha, Lauro'at Hidayatul 2026** *Communication Accommodation Analysis of Verbal Convergence on the Tiktok 'English on the Street'*. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Advisor Mazroatul Ishlahiyah, M.Pd.

**Keywords:** *Verbal Convergence, Communication Accommodation Theory, Tiktok, Code Switching*

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In the digital age, social media platforms like TikTok have become a massive space for bilingual communication, but language proficiency inequities often create barriers to interaction. Verbal convergence analysis is essential to understand how the speaker is actively adapting his or her language to ensure inclusive communication. This study aimed to investigate the strategies and functions of verbal convergence in TikTok content "*English on the Street*". Using a qualitative descriptive method based on Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 2016), data were collected from four selected videos featuring respondents with limited English language skills. The findings showed that interviewers predominantly used structural simplification and code-switching to bridge the competency gap. Functionally, this strategy is driven by Social Alignment to maintain smooth message exchange and minimize barriers. The study found a clear convergence boundary, where interviewers consistently avoided language shifting to maintain the identity of the content. In conclusion, verbal convergence in spontaneous digital interactions serves as a practical strategy to encourage inclusive communication while maintaining the speaker's professional role in the public sphere.

## ABSTRAK

**Faroha, Lauro'at Hidayatul 2026** *Communication Accommodation Analysis of Verbal Convergence on the Tiktok 'English on the Street'*. Tesis. Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Pembimbing Mazroatul Ishlahiyah, M.Pd.

**Keywords:** *Verbal Convergence, Communication Accommodation Theory, Tiktok, Code Switching*

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Di era digital, platform media sosial seperti TikTok telah menjadi ruang masif untuk komunikasi bilingual, namun ketimpangan kemahiran berbahasa sering kali menciptakan hambatan interaksi. Analisis konvergensi verbal sangat penting untuk memahami bagaimana penutur secara aktif mengadaptasi bahasanya guna memastikan komunikasi yang inklusif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki strategi dan fungsi konvergensi verbal dalam konten TikTok "*English on the Street*". Menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif berdasarkan Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 2016), data dikumpulkan dari empat video terpilih yang menampilkan responden dengan kemampuan bahasa Inggris terbatas. Hasil temuan menunjukkan bahwa pewawancara secara dominan menggunakan structural simplification dan code-switching untuk menjembatani kesenjangan kompetensi. Secara fungsional, strategi ini didorong oleh Social Alignment untuk menjaga kelancaran pertukaran pesan dan meminimalkan hambatan. Penelitian ini menemukan batas konvergensi yang jelas, di mana pewawancara secara konsisten menghindari language shifting untuk mempertahankan identitas konten. Kesimpulannya, konvergensi verbal dalam interaksi digital yang spontan berfungsi sebagai strategi praktis untuk mendorong komunikasi inklusif sekaligus mempertahankan peran profesional penutur di ranah publik.

## المُلخَص

فراحا، لورأت هداية 2026 تحليل المواءمة التواصلية للتقارب اللفظي في محتوى تيك توك. "English on the Street" أطروحة. قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية مالانج. المشرفة: مزرعة الإصلاحية، ماجستير في التربية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التقارب اللفظي، نظرية المواءمة التواصلية، تيك توك، التبديل اللغوي.

في العصر الرقمي، أصبحت منصات التواصل الاجتماعي مثل تيك توك (TikTok) مساحات هائلة للتواصل ثنائي اللغة، ومع ذلك، غالبًا ما يؤدي التفاوت في الكفاءة اللغوية إلى خلق حواجز في التفاعل. يُعد تحليل التقارب اللفظي أمرًا بالغ الأهمية لفهم كيف يكيّف المتحدثون لغتهم بنشاط لضمان تواصل شامل. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء استراتيجيات ووظائف التقارب اللفظي في محتوى تيك توك. "English on the Street" باستخدام المنهج الوصفي النوعي بناءً على نظرية المواءمة التواصلية (Giles, 2016)، تم جمع البيانات من أربعة مقاطع فيديو مختارة تظهر مشاركين ذوي كفاءة محدودة في اللغة الإنجليزية. أظهرت النتائج أن المحاور يستخدم بشكل سائد التبسيط الهيكلي (structural simplification) والتبديل اللغوي (code-switching) لسد الفجوة في الكفاءة. من الناحية الوظيفية، فإن هذه الاستراتيجيات مدفوعة بالتوافق الاجتماعي (Social Alignment) للحفاظ على سلاسة تبادل الرسائل وتقليل العوائق. وجدت هذه الدراسة حدًا واضحًا للتقارب، حيث يتجنب المحاور باستمرار التحول اللغوي (language shifting) للحفاظ على هوية المحتوى. في الختام، يعمل التقارب اللفظي في التفاعلات الرقمية العفوية كاستراتيجية عملية لتعزيز التواصل الشامل مع الحفاظ في الوقت نفسه على الدور المهني للمتحدث في المجال العام.

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This section discusses the background of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitations, and definition of key terms.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

In recent decades, changes in the way humans communicate cannot be separated from the rapid development of information technology. If previously social interaction relied heavily on physical presence, now communication takes place through increasingly complex digital spaces. Social media has become one of the main spaces for this shift, not only as a means of entertainment, but also as a meeting place for individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Jebaselvi et al., 2023). Nugraha et al. (2022) show that in this context, social media functions as a space for cross-cultural interaction that allows for widespread language exchange. Among the various platforms that exist, TikTok occupies an interesting position due to its characteristics that encourage rapid and spontaneous language production, especially through short video formats that are rarely through careful planning (Cervi, 2021).

In Indonesia, the development of social media has considerable implications for public communication patterns. The very high number of TikTok user's places Indonesia as one of the most active digital spaces globally (Puertas et al., 2021). The Digital 2025 Global Overview report released by We Are Social and Meltwater (2025) recorded around 143 million active social media users in

Indonesia, a figure that not only shows the size of the digital market, but also the intensity of the interactions that occur within it. This condition opens wide opportunities for bilingual communication, especially those involving English as a connecting language between speakers from different linguistic backgrounds.

However, the high frequency of these interactions is not always accompanied by equality of language skills. In practice, differences in language proficiency levels are often a source of communication barriers, including in educational content on TikTok (Maldani & Setiawan, 2021). This situation requires the speaker to not only convey the message, but also to adjust the way it is delivered. Therefore, strategies such as simplifying vocabulary, repeating information, setting the tempo of speech, and code switching are an integral part of the daily communication process in the Indonesian digital space (Adams & Miles, 2023)

The condition of bilingual communication that takes place in the Indonesian digital space can be seen more concretely in the TikTok content "*English on the Street*." These accounts contain conversations that bring creators together with random people and take place in the form of bilingual interactions (Fisma et al., 2025). Unlike other bilingual content that often features staged interactions or involves people who already have a previous communication pattern, "*English on the Street*" relies entirely on spontaneous encounters with strangers whose level of English proficiency is completely unpredictable. This high level of uncertainty is what forces creators to make instant and dynamic language accommodations to prevent communication deadlocks.



The selection of the TikTok account "*English on the Street*" as the object of research is based on its position as a recognized subject in the academic discourse on digital language learning. Previous research conducted by Fisma et al., (2025) has explored this account to identify English language learning strategies through spontaneous interviews. However, the study limited its focus to the taxonomy of learning strategies (such as cognitive and social strategies) and has not touched upon the realm of interactional dynamics through the lens of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT).

The adjustment of the way of speaking appears to be a response that arises directly to the communication situation (Fisma et al., 2025). Creators often slow down when the opponent expresses doubt or ask for clarification. In addition, simpler vocabulary choices are also often used, especially when the initial question is not immediately understood. In some cases, creators have switched to Indonesian to ensure the intent of the question is conveyed before returning to English. A similar pattern can also be seen from the respondents' side, who sometimes repeat answers, mix languages, or restructure sentences to make them easier to understand.

These adjustments are not always made consciously or deliberately. Instead, this practice emerged as part of an effort to maintain the continuity of the conversation amid time constraints and the pressures of the public situation. This situation shows that the success of communication in such a context does not depend only on language skills, but also on the speaker's flexibility in adjusting the speaking style according to the counter-speaker's response (Fisma et al., 2025).

The phenomenon of language adjustment that arises in these interactions can be further understood through a theoretical framework that discusses how the speaker responds to his interlocutor in certain social situations. One of the relevant theories for reading this pattern is Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) based on the framework elaborated by Howard Giles (2016). This theory departs from the assumption that the way a person speaks is not neutral but is often tailored to who their interlocutor is and the social goals they want to achieve in the conversation (Giles, 2016). In this case, language adjustment is not solely concerned with linguistic accuracy, but also with efforts to create comfort, reduce social distancing, and maintain continuity of interaction (Gasiorek, 2016). This is especially important in conversations involving speakers of different language backgrounds, as seen in *English on the Street* content. Thus, CAT provides a framework that helps explain why speakers tend to change the tempo of speech, choice of words, or even the language used when faced with certain responses from the counter-speaker.

Language adjustment within the framework of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) can appear in several forms, one of which is verbal convergence. Convergence refers to the tendency of speakers to adjust the way they speak to be closer to the opposing style, both in terms of vocabulary choice, speaking tempo, and language used (Giles et al., 1991). According to Giles, this strategy is generally carried out to increase the effectiveness of communication while reducing the potential for misunderstanding, especially when there is a difference in the level of language proficiency between speakers (Giles, et.al 1991).

The focus of this research is specifically limited to the phenomenon of verbal convergence. This decision was made referring to the results of previous studies which show that in the context of asymmetric and informal bilingual interactions, convergence strategies tend to be the dominant pattern that emerges to ensure smooth communication (Weizheng, 2019). Considering that the interaction pattern in "*English on the Street*" involves differences in language competence levels between the creator and the respondents, the use of verbal convergence strategies becomes the most crucial instrument for speakers to reduce social distance and increase the effectiveness of message delivery (Fisma et al., 2025). Thus, focusing the analysis on verbal convergence is seen as the most relevant step theoretically and empirically to dissect the active accommodation strategies carried out by the creator in maintaining the continuity of the conversation.

Several previous studies have applied Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and discussed language interaction on TikTok in various contexts. Based on the focus of the study, these studies can be grouped into two main categories, namely research on TikTok as a language learning medium and research that directly applies CAT in bilingual, digital, and intercultural interactions.

The first group consisted of research that highlighted TikTok as a medium of language interaction and learning, as conducted by Fisma et al. (2025), Rininggayuh et al. (2024), Sulistianah et al. (2025), and Xiuwen & Razali (2021).

Fisma et al. (2025) examined English language learning strategies demonstrated in spontaneous street interviews on the TikTok platform, utilizing Oxford's (1990) taxonomy of language learning strategies. They found that speakers

frequently employed cognitive, social, and metacognitive strategies, utilizing practical language adjustments such as simplification and repetition to maintain smooth communication.

Furthermore, Rininggayuh et al. (2024) conducted a systematic literature review to investigate the effectiveness of TikTok as a medium for enhancing English speaking skills by employing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) framework. The results indicated that the platform supports the development of fluent speaking through natural interaction and the repeated use of English in informal contexts.

Sulistianah et al. (2025) reviewed the utilization of TikTok for English Language Teaching (ELT) using a systematic review approach based on the PRISMA guidelines. The study concluded that TikTok serves as an authentic and dynamic language learning space, highlighting how exposure to English outside the classroom and the nature of digital interactions significantly facilitate language acquisition.

Meanwhile, Xiuwen and Razali (2021) explored the role of TikTok in improving the oral English communication competence of EFL undergraduate students by applying the Communicative Competence Theory model proposed by Canale and Swain (1980). Their findings concluded that the platform aids learners in applying English to real-life situations, thereby increasing their confidence in practical language use.

While these studies provide valuable insights into TikTok's role in language acquisition and general learning strategies, this research distinguishes itself by

shifting the focus from learning outcomes and pedagogical strategies to the real-time interactional dynamics of verbal convergence. Unlike previous works that view the "*English on the Street*" content as a learning tool, this study analyzes it as a site of spontaneous linguistic adaptation and active accommodation.

The second group includes research that applies CAT specifically in digital, bilingual, or cross-cultural interactions, among others by Liu et al. (2022), Rifaldi & Sinduwiatmo (2025), Krisnuwardhana & Arimi (2025), Elhami & Roshan (2021), Immanuel et al. (2025), Indriani (2021), and Salsabila (2022).

Liu et al. (2022) applied Communication Accommodation Theory to investigate the influence of a firm's feedback on the linguistic style matching of user-generated content. They found that digital media users actively perform linguistic style matching as a form of verbal accommodation after receiving feedback, reinforcing the relevance of CAT in online interactions.

Research by Rifaldi and Sinduwiatmo (2025) analyzed communication accommodation practices within a specific TikTok account using Giles's Communication Accommodation Theory. The study revealed that the creator utilizes verbal convergence strategies such as repetition, code-mixing, and expressive intonation to reinforce messages, build social closeness, and maintain audience engagement in digital interactions.

Krisnuwardhana and Arimi (2025) investigated bilingual interactions between Indonesian and Russian speakers on TikTok, employing Communication Accommodation Theory to map their interactional dynamics. The study demonstrated that asymmetric convergence strategies dominate the interactions,

specifically through language selection, lexical adjustments, and upward/downward convergence, which the foreign speaker utilizes to seek communal acceptance and create social closeness.

In the realm of public communication, Elhami and Roshan (2021) utilized Communication Accommodation Theory to examine public health messaging during the Covid-19 pandemic. They revealed that language adjustments and accommodations were strategically made to clarify critical health messages and build emotional closeness with the public in times of crisis.

Research by Immanuel et al. (2025) applied Communication Accommodation Theory to explore the communication strategies among members of an online gaming community. The findings showed that community members utilize slang vocabulary with altered meanings as a specific convergence strategy to strengthen social relationships and in-group identity among fellow members.

Indriani (2021) investigated communication accommodation within conversations among multilingual family members using Communication Accommodation Theory. The study identified that family members frequently apply simplification of vocabulary, repetition, and code-switching as forms of convergence to bridge differences in language proficiency.

Salsabila (2022) applied Communication Accommodation Theory to analyze cross-cultural communication between foreign managers and local staff in a corporate environment. The research found that foreign speakers engaged in language accommodation by adjusting their word choices and incorporating local

languages to reduce social distance and improve overall communication effectiveness.

Previous research has mapped TikTok as an effective language learning medium and proved the flexibility of CAT in various digital interactions. However, there is a large gap where CAT research is currently still dominated by text interaction or a stable digital community. There has been no study that focuses on the dynamics of verbal accommodation in street interview interactions that are spontaneous, unplanned, and involve real inequality in language competence.

This gap is important to study because street interview interactions on TikTok have a unique pressure, namely that speakers must maintain smooth communication with respondents who have limited language, but at the same time must maintain an English identity as the main concept of the content. Therefore, this study aims to identify the strategy of verbal convergence and explain the function behind such communication maneuvers in the content of "*English on the Street*". Practically, this research can provide insight for language educators, and the public on the importance of communication adjustment strategies to create effective, inclusive, and meaningful cross-language interactions.

## **B. Research Questions**

To clarify the preceding discussion, this research aims to answer these research questions:

1. What are the forms of verbal convergence occurred in the bilingual interactions in the content of *English on the Street*?

2. How is verbal convergence used by speakers to achieve communication effectiveness in bilingual interactions?

### **C. Significance of The Study**

This research contributes to expanding the application of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) in the realm of informal and spontaneous digital communication. Given that previous research focused more on structured interactions such as in the classroom or work environment, this study fills this gap by providing a new understanding of how language convergence strategies are practiced naturally in a minimally controlled social media ecosystem.

Practically, this study provides insight for educators, language learners, and content creators on how communication accommodation strategies can increase the effectiveness of cross-language interactions. In addition, the findings of this study can be used as an applicative reference to build bilingual communication practices that are more inclusive, relevant, and easy to understand in the digital space, especially for multilingual Indonesians.

### **D. Scope and Limitation**

The scope of this research is in sociolinguistic studies, which is specifically limited to the analysis of verbal convergence in bilingual interactions on TikTok content "*English on the Street*". Based on the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) framework proposed by Giles (2016), this study focuses exclusively on identifying the types and explaining the functions of verbal convergence strategies. This analysis is strictly limited to language adjustments made by the content creator as a party that actively accommodates the interlocutor. The data



selection is restricted to videos published in 2025 to 2026. Data were selected specifically on interactions with respondents with low English proficiency. These criteria were identified through the respondents' explicit statements about their limited language skills.

This study did not include or analyze divergence strategies, maintenance, non-verbal accommodation, or any communication accommodation strategies carried out by the respondents. Given these limitations, the results of this study are descriptive and are specifically tied to the dynamics of videos that meet the criteria, so they are not intended to be generalized to other digital communication contexts.

### **E. Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid misunderstandings, the terms used in this study are defined as follows

1. Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT): a theory that explains how speakers adapt their speech style for specific social goals by means of convergence, divergence, and maintenance. In this study, CAT was used as a framework to analyze verbal convergence strategies in bilingual interactions on TikTok.
2. Verbal Convergence: a communication adjustment strategy carried out by speakers to bring their speaking style closer to the other speaker (Giles, 1991). Verbal convergence specifically refers to adjustments made through linguistic aspects, such as language choice, speech rate adjustment, structural simplification and lexical adjustment used in interaction.

3. Digital Interactions: interactions that take place through digital platforms. In this study, this term refers to bilingual conversations on TikTok *English on the Street* which is the main context for the analysis of accommodative communication strategies.
4. English on the Street: a specific TikTok account and content format that features spontaneous, unscripted bilingual interviews between the content creator and random people in public spaces. In this study, it serves as the primary object and data source for observing verbal convergence in real-life digital interactions.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter presents an overview of the theories and research on which this research is based. The discussion includes key concepts in sociolinguistics, the use of language in bilingual interactions, the role of TikTok as a communication medium, and Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) as the main analytical framework of the research.

#### **A. Sociolinguistics in a Digital Context**

Sociolinguistics has since developed from an interest in the relationship between language and social life. Language is understood as part of the way humans build relationships, assert identity, and place themselves in society (Trudgill, 1974). The way a person speaks, the choice of words used, and the style of language chosen are always related to who the person they are talking to and in what social situations the interaction takes place.

However, the way humans interact is not static. Changes in communication technology are slowly shifting the social spaces where language is used. Interactions that previously took place in person now occur mostly through digital devices (Crystal, 2001). Conversation no longer demands physical presence, and language begins to adapt to the medium that mediates that communication (Holmes & Wilson, 2022). More concise, fluid, and flexible forms of language are becoming more prevalent, as the intensity of digital communication in everyday life increases (Herring, 2004).

This change in medium has consequences that are not simple. Language in the digital use to maintain closeness, attract attention, and adapt to audiences that are often not fully familiar (Thurlow & Mroczek, 2012). At this point, language begins to work in tandem with social strategies, rather than standing alone as a linguistic system (Jaspers, 2023). Social relations are still present, but in a form mediated by technology.

Social media shows this dynamic very clearly. The platforms are interactive, open, and incorporate different modes of communication at once (Androutsopoulos, 2014). The language used in it is often a means of presenting oneself, building an image, and negotiating social positions in front of a wide audience (Herring, 2013). Therefore, language choices on social media are rarely neutral; It is almost always related to the purpose of communication and the perception of who will receive the message (Boyd, 2014).

This situation shows that the use of language in the digital space cannot be separated from its social context, even though it is no longer physical. Speakers are constantly adapting the way they speak, whether consciously or unconsciously, following the norms that evolve in certain online communities (Jebaselvi et al., 2023). This adjustment makes the practice of speaking on social media fluid and highly dependent on the audience and the accompanying social expectations (Androutsopoulos, 2014).

One of the most prominent forms of sociolinguistic adjustment in Indonesian society is the practice of bilingualism in face-to-face interactions and digital spaces. Indonesia is sociolinguistically known as a multilingual society with

the habit of using more than one language in daily social interactions (Zarbaliyeva, 2021). People are very accustomed to accompanying the use of national languages with foreign languages, especially English (Kim & Runco, 2022). The existence of the two languages does not stand apart but coexist and are often used interchangeably by the speakers in the same interaction situation.

The form of bilingualism that most often appears in oral communication in public spaces is the phenomenon of code-switching and code-mixing (Rukmi & Khasanah, 2020). This practice manifests itself in the form of a move from one language to another, or simply the insertion of foreign elements of words and phrases into the structure of the main language. This language transfer generally takes place spontaneously in daily interactions and is often unnoticed because it has become a habit that takes root in the social environment (Virginia, 2015).

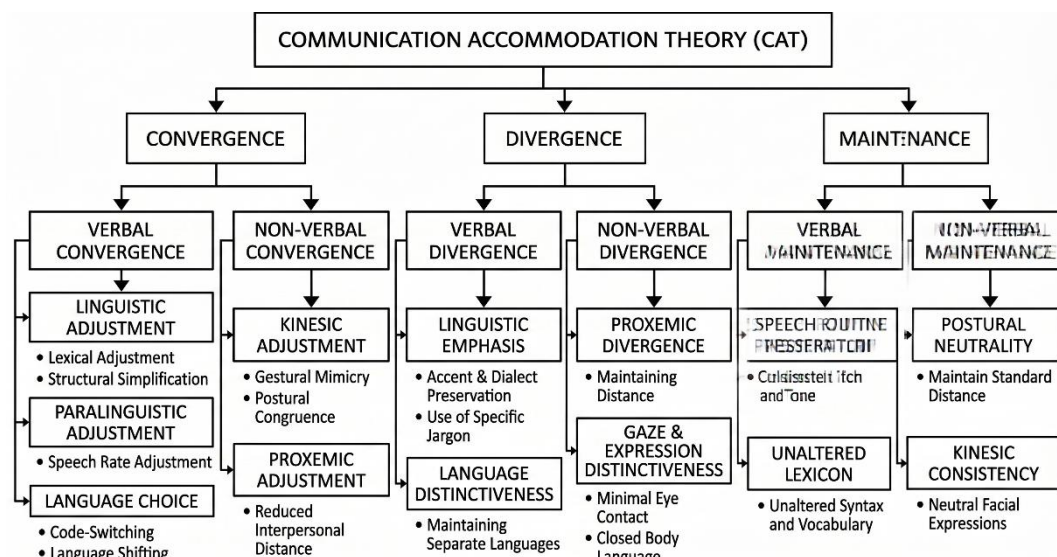
Language selection in a bilingual context also essentially serves as a strategic choice that goes beyond mere habitual factors. Speakers make language adjustments as a social tactic in public spaces to build closeness and ensure that messages can be understood well by the opposite speaker (Putri et al., 2023). This bilingual flexibility helps speakers navigate the course of interaction so that communication can run smoothly, adaptively, and does not feel exclusive to heterogeneous audiences (Syarifuddin, 2022).

## **B. Communication Accommodation Theory**

Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) is a theory introduced by Giles (2016) to explain how individuals adjust the way they communicate when interacting with others. This initial idea grew out of the observation that differences

in language, accent, and speech style often reflect the social relationship between the speaker and the opponent (Dragojevic et al., 2016). Giles views that the way a person speaks reflects how he positions himself socially, so communication always contains the meaning of identity and social relations, not just the exchange of information (Giles et al., 1991a).

CAT theory formulates three main accommodation orientations in the form of convergence (aligning oneself with the opposite speaker), divergence (highlighting differences to affirm group identity), and maintenance (maintaining the original language style) (Giles et al., 1991b). Figure 2.1 illustrates the comprehensive taxonomy of these accommodation strategies in both verbal and non-verbal dimensions.



Gambar 2.1

There are two main sociopsychological frameworks that form the motivation behind these communication adjustments. First, Similarity-Attraction Theory encourages convergence through the tendency of individuals to seek social

closeness with those who have something in common. Second, Social Identity Theory is used as a foundation for divergence and defense through the maintenance of language boundaries to protect group pride (Giles, 2016). The relationship of power and linguistic competence also forms the phenomenon of asymmetric accommodation in these interactions. Speakers who are more fluent or dominant in bilingual interactions must make greater linguistic adjustments to bridge the gap and facilitate communication (Dragojevic et al., 2016).

Technological developments are expanding the application of CAT from traditional face-to-face interactions to the digital realm (Soliz et al., 2022). Language adjustment in digital spaces such as social media has turned out to be very performative. Speakers must adapt to the direct counterpart along with heterogeneous online platform and audience norms (Giles et al., 2023). The basic principles of CAT remain highly relevant for analyzing the way in which individuals negotiate social identity through language in a digital public space without being affected by changes in the medium.

This research requires a more targeted approach beyond the comprehensive framework of CAT in Figure 2.1. Cervi (2021) and Fisma et al. (2025) prove that bilingual interaction on the TikTok platform takes place spontaneously and fast-paced. Such an asymmetrical communication environment without scripts requires speakers to prioritize shared understanding and message effectiveness over social distancing efforts (Giles et al., 1991). Instead of analyzing the entire spectrum of accommodations such as divergences or non-verbal cues, the study exclusively narrowed its theoretical lens on verbal convergence. This specific focus allows for

a more in-depth empirical analysis of how content creators actively and instantly modify their spoken language to align with the spoken counterpart in an "*English on the Street*" interview on TikTok.

### **C. Convergence in Communication Accommodation Theory**

Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) defines convergence as a communication strategy when the speaker adjusts his or her communicative behavior to more closely resemble the opponent or the intended audience (Giles, 2016). The convergence in this study is focused on the realm of verbal convergence in the form of adjustment in the use of spoken language during interaction. Giles (1991; 2016) explains that this convergence can be observed through Structural simplification, lexical adjustment, paralinguistic adjustment, and language choice in bilingual contexts, although he does not explicitly divide verbal convergence into specific micro categories.

To understand how convergence operates in an interaction, it is important to consider the direction and level of accommodation (Giles, 2016). The direction of accommodation in convergence is categorized into upward convergence and downward convergence. Upward convergence occurs when speakers change their language style to a more prestigious or formal variety, such as job applicants who emphasize regional accents and use standard language during interviews. Downward convergence occurs when the speaker deliberately adopts a less prestigious, simpler, or more relaxed style of communication to keep pace with the interlocutor (Giles et al., 1991).



In addition to the direction, convergence is also measured based on its level, namely full convergence and partial convergence. Full convergence is a total communicative change when the speaker completely discards his or her original language style and adopts the language of the opponent (Giles & Ogay, 2007). Partial convergence occurs when the speaker accommodates the interlocutor only through the adjustment of certain linguistic features such as slowing down the tempo of speech or simplifying grammar while still maintaining the structure of the original language (Giles, 2016).

This study specifically isolates verbal convergence as the main focus of analysis as illustrated by the previous CAT framework. Verbal convergence within this scope is analyzed through three main dimensions that are operationalized into specific indicators:

#### 1. Linguistic Adjustment

Linguistic adjustment refers to modifications at the language code level, including vocabulary choices and syntactic structure (Giles et al., 2016). This study operates linguistic adjustment into two indicators:

- a) Lexical Adjustment: This adjustment occurs when a speaker changes his or her vocabulary choices to be simpler, more specific, or more familiar to the speaker (Giles et al., 1991b). Giles often points to asymmetric interactions such as doctor-patient communication to illustrate this theoretical concept. Lexical convergence is evident when a doctor deliberately replaces complicated medical jargon with everyday vocabulary or analogies so that layman patients can easily understand his diagnosis.

b) **Structural Simplification:** this is an adjustment of syntactic structure through the reduction of grammatical complexity during interaction (Giles, 2016). Giles illustrates this through the phenomenon of foreigner talk. Fluent native speakers tend to throw out complicated subordinative clauses and shorten their sentences when interacting with foreign language learners. Speakers switch from long compound sentences to basic structures directly to adapt to the capacity of the opponent (Dragojevic et al., 2016).

## 2. Paralinguistic Adjustment

**Speech Rate Adjustment:** is a change in elements such as rhythm, intonation, and speech tempo (Giles, 2016). Giles places this aspect as part of the approximation strategy. The speaker will perform paralinguistic convergence by significantly slowing down the tempo of his speech, clarifying articulation, and providing deliberate pauses (micro-pauses) between words when he realizes that the opponent is confused. This step gives enough cognitive time for the speaker to process linguistic input (Gasiorek, 2016).

## 3. Language Choice

Language choice is the most prominent form of verbal convergence when speakers actively choose a particular language to socially align themselves with the spoken opponent (Giles, 2016). This accommodation practice is realized through two mechanisms:

a) **Code Switching:** This mechanism involves the use or insertion of different language elements alternately in a single episode of conversation (Giles et al., 1991a). This convergence occurs when a speaker inserts words, phrases, or

slang terms from the opposing language into the sentence of the original language to clarify the message or build closeness without having to switch languages entirely (Giles et al., 1991b).

- b) Language Shifting: This mechanism is a more comprehensive form of language selection and involves a complete change of the basic language in an interaction segment (Giles, 2016). Giles' (1973) early research on interaction in Montreal shows a fundamental example of this phenomenon when an English speaker completely abandons his or her native language and switches to using French when interacting with the local community to minimize social distancing (Dragojevic et al., 2016).

Giles (2016) explained that verbal convergence does not occur by chance but is strongly driven by the social orientation of the speaker. This theoretical motivation is classified into three main functions:

1. Social Approval (Affective Function)

Social approval is understood as the speaker's effort to adjust his or her speech to get a positive social response, acceptance, or validation from the counterpart (Giles, 2016). Giles et al. (1991) illustrate this affective function through job interview situations within the CAT framework. A job applicant will consciously suppress his or her native accent and mimic the level of formality and raw vocabulary of the interviewer. The function of social approval encourages this convergence purely so that the speaker can successfully project a professional image to meet social expectations and get a positive assessment (Gasiorek, 2016).

## 2. Social Alignment (Cognitive Function)

Social alignment is the speaker's effort to create harmony and smooth interaction so that linguistic boundaries do not hinder the exchange of messages (Giles, 2016). This cognitive function aims to make it easier for the speech opponent to grasp the meaning of speech. Giles illustrates this alignment through the situation of giving directions to foreign tourists. Native speakers are purely in tune with their languages such as slowing down the tempo or using the most basic vocabulary to make interactions run smoothly, efficiently, and without cognitive barriers.

## 3. Identity Management (Intergroup Function)

Identity management is concerned with the way speakers use language adjustments to negotiate their social position (Giles, 2016). Giles et al. (1991) explain the function between these groups through the phenomenon of adolescents or individuals who carry out social mobility. Someone who has just moved to a new neighborhood will consciously adopt a local accent or slang as an example of this case. This alignment was carried out to remove the social label of "out-group" and project a new identity to be recognized as part of the group (in-group).

Verbal convergence is understood as the practice of language adjustment that takes place in various aspects of speech and is driven by the social orientation of the speaker. This conceptual framework will be the operational basis in this study to examine the form of verbal convergence in asymmetrical public interaction.

#### **D. TikTok as Digital Communication Platform**

The TikTok platform is widely known as a short video-based social media with very fast content production facilities (Ramadhani, 2025). The labeling of TikTok as a pure means of entertainment does not hinder the development of this platform into a massive public space for message production and social interaction (Kaye et al., 2021). Spoken language remains the main control in the delivery of content messages amid the dominance of these audio-visual elements (Wijaya Ananda et al., 2025). Clark (2023) emphasized that the creator's choice of vocabulary and speaking style greatly determines the level of acceptance of messages as well as the formation of an emotional connection with the audience.

The characteristics of interaction on these platforms are very different from traditional face-to-face conversations due to the absence of direct and simultaneous two-way communication (Bautista et al., 2021). Content creators make speeches without knowing the exact identity of their audience. Audiences can also respond separately through the likes and comment sections. This disconnected state of communication forces the speaker to always deal with an anonymous and heterogeneous public audience. Speakers generally address this uncertainty of listeners' backgrounds by using "imaginary public audiences" as a reference for their speaking style (Valiant, 2020).

The limitations of short video lengths ultimately encourage content creators to manage their language more densely and concisely (Feldkamp, 2021). Convolutional or overly formal speaking styles tend to be avoided because they have the potential to create social distance with the audience (Radin & Light, 2022).

Therefore, there is a continuous process of language adjustment behind the content of the street interview that seems spontaneous to maintain smooth interaction. Sociolinguistic studies define this strategy as a form of verbal convergence when speakers adapt their language according to social assumptions about the public. (Thurlow & Mroczek, 2012; Yunus & Pratiwi, 2024).

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **RESEARCH METHOD**

This chapter explains the research method used to analyze the data. The researcher could also explain the strategies used to collect and examine the data. It outlines five main sections: research design, data and data sources, research instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques.

##### **A. Research Design**

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method because the analysis focuses on the strategies and functions of verbal convergence used in bilingual interactions on TikTok *English on the Street* content. This qualitative method involves collecting data from conversations, with the focus being on dissecting speech, words, and phrases used as research objects. Because this study analyzes these elements of language to uncover the implicit meaning of social reality, the qualitative method is very suitable for use (Raharjdo, 2018). This approach is particularly relevant because qualitative is a method by which researchers can develop an in-depth analysis of an individual phenomenon, activity, process, or interaction (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In addition, this method is also specifically used to understand and investigate human problems that are interpreted through the existence of a discourse (Creswell, 2013). As the main scalpel, the researcher refers to Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) (Giles, 2016) to analyze the verbal convergence strategies used in these interactions. In the research process, the researcher also refers to various journals and books to

understand the concept of verbal convergence as well as the social dimension of language in digital communication.

## **B. Data and Data Source**

The data in this research were utterances, words, phrases, and sentences produced by the interviewer in the *English on the Street* TikTok videos. The data source for this study was the TikTok account *@englishonthestreet* (<https://www.tiktok.com/@englishonthestreet>). The data were collected from four selected videos posted in 2025 to 2026, which depicted spontaneous bilingual interactions between the interviewer and respondents with limited English proficiency. These four videos were purposely selected because they explicitly showcased the verbal convergence strategies used by the interviewer to facilitate communication with respondents who struggled to speak English. Other videos involving respondents with higher English proficiency were excluded, as they did not meet the focus of this research. The selected videos depicting the accommodated interactions can be accessed through the following URLs:

Video 1:

<https://www.tiktok.com/@englishonthestreet/video/7402179106961411333>

- Video 2:

<https://www.tiktok.com/@englishonthestreet/video/7547630549721206021>



- Video 3:

<https://www.tiktok.com/@englishonthestreet/video/7518335186040409400>

- Video 4:

<https://www.tiktok.com/@englishonthestreet/video/7608919082330557716>

### **C. Research Instrument**

Research instruments must be valid, reliable, and capable of collecting precise data to meet the study's goals. The primary tool for both gathering and analyzing the data in this study is the researcher, as no other instruments were used. The researcher independently carried out the procedures for collecting and examining verbal convergence strategies, among other tasks.

### **D. Data Collection**

Data collection was conducted through documentary methods: direct observation of the *English on the Street* TikTok videos. The data collection steps were as follows. First, the researcher sorted the videos according to specific criteria, specifically focusing on interactions involving respondents with limited English proficiency. Second, the researcher watched the selected videos and identified verbal convergence strategies such as words, phrases, or sentences in the interactions between the interviewer and respondents. Third, the spoken dialogues are transcribed, and utterances that demonstrated verbal convergence strategies are underlined and grouped in the table to prepare for data analysis.

## **E. Data Analysis**

In the process of data analysis, the researcher used Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 2016), which focuses on verbal convergence strategies. The researcher identified three main types of verbal convergence strategies: Linguistic Adjustment, Paralinguistic Adjustment, and Language Choice. The first step in data analysis was to organize and prepare the data by reviewing the transcribed utterances from the selected videos. In this step, the researcher examined the spoken dialogues of the interviewer and the respondents, focusing on interactions where verbal convergence occurred. The researcher then classified the data based on the identified strategies, ensuring that they aligned with the theoretical framework of CAT. Lastly, the researcher interpreted the data to identify patterns in the verbal convergence strategies used by the interviewer to accommodate the respondents' language needs. The analysis helped to provide insights into how these strategies facilitate communication in bilingual interactions on TikTok.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter is structured to present both the findings and the discussion to address the research questions. The collected data are presented systematically in the findings section, followed by an in-depth discussion that explains the interrelation between these findings and the theoretical framework. Through this process, the research questions are comprehensively answered within this chapter.

#### **A. Findings**

In this section, the study presents findings regarding verbal convergence strategies and the underlying functions used by interviewers in bilingual interactions on the *English on the Street* TikTok account. Data was extracted from four selected videos, resulting in a total of 18 utterances that met the criteria for verbal accommodation. The analysis focuses on five dimensions of verbal convergence based on Giles' (2016) Communication Accommodation Theory, namely Lexical Adjustment (LA), Structural Simplification (SS), Speech Rate Adjustment (SR), Code Switching (CS), and Language Shift (LS). In addition, the findings are categorized into three accommodative functions: Social Consent, Social Alignment, and Identity Management. The overall distribution of data is systematically summarized in Table 4.

| Video   | Strategies |    |    |    |    | Function        |                  |                     |
|---------|------------|----|----|----|----|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|
|         | LA         | SS | SR | CS | LS | Social Approval | Social Alignment | Identity Management |
| Video 1 | 2          | 5  | 5  | 7  | 0  | 0               | 8                | 0                   |
| Video 2 | 2          | 1  | 0  | 2  | 0  | 0               | 3                | 1                   |
| Video 3 | 0          | 2  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 0               | 2                | 0                   |
| Video 4 | 1          | 3  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 0               | 4                | 0                   |
| Total   | 5          | 11 | 5  | 11 | 0  | 0               | 17               | 1                   |

Table 4.1.

Summary of Verbal Convergence Strategies and function Found in All Videos

Based on the data presented in Table 4.1 above, there were 32 occurrences of verbal convergence strategies identified among 18 utterances from four videos. The data revealed that Structural Simplification (11 occurrences) and Code Switching (11 occurrences) were the most frequently used strategies by interviewers to accommodate strangers. In contrast, Lexical Adjustment (5 occurrences) and Speech Rate Adjustment (5 occurrences) are used less frequently. Notably, Language Shift was completely absent (0 occurrences) in the data, suggesting that interviewers never completely abandoned English to adopt the language of the interlocutor, maintaining a partial convergence approach.

Furthermore, regarding the function of communication accommodation, the data showed a great tendency towards Social Alignment, which dominated with 17 occurrences out of a total of 18 data points. Identity Management appears very rarely, identified only in 1 occurrence, whereas the Social Consent function is not found at all (0 occurrences) in any interaction.

To provide a thorough overview of how these strategies and functions operate in a first-hand bilingual context, an in-depth analysis is presented sequentially based on each video below.

## 1. Video 1

<https://www.tiktok.com/@englishonthestreet/video/7402179106961411333>

In the first video, the respondent is an individual who has just graduated from high School that is walking on the streets of Bandung. In this interaction, the respondents' English skills were seen to be at the basic level. This is explicitly emphasized at the beginning of the video when the interviewer asks, "Can you speak English?" and the respondent responds with the answer, "a little little", which indicates the limitations of his linguistic competence. This asymmetrical condition requires the interviewer to actively make various verbal adjustments so that communication is not interrupted and maintained.

### Datum 1

I: When did you learn it?  
 I: I mean {learn English}  
 R: um...  
 I: <When did you learn English?>  
 R: Oh um...  
 I: {Learn English}  
 R: Yes  
 I: <When you were still elementary school? You learned English?>

In the context of the above statement, when the interviewer asks the initial question "*When did you learn it?*", the respondent does not understand the meaning of the question and only responds in the form of a murmur "*um...*". This confusion triggers the interviewer to immediately implement a **Speech Rate Adjustment** strategy by slowing down the tempo of his speech when repeating the question. This tempo adjustment is carried out tactically to provide additional cognitive time for respondents in processing the interviewer's words (Giles, 2016).

The **Lexical Adjustment** category was also found in the form of lexical clarification, where the interviewer changed the all-too-common pronoun reference "*learn it*" to a more specific form, namely "*learn English*". This lexicon replacement is explicitly done so that the object of conversation becomes more concrete and easier to capture by the respondents (Giles et al., 1991).

The interviewer also applied **Structural Simplification** to accommodate the respondents' grammatical limitations. This form of simplification is evident when the interviewer changes the structure of the complete question to a much simpler, segmented structure, and deliberately omits the grammatical elements of the question (such as the loss of auxiliary verbs) to mere assertive speech with the intonation of the question, as in the sentences "*Learn English*" and "*Did you learn English?*" (Giles et al., 1991).

The entire linguistic and paralinguistic maneuver in datum 1 is fully driven by the **Social Alignment** function. The interviewer modified his speech to align with the capacity of the respondent who had initially admitted that his ability was only "*a little little*". This verbal convergence is not carried out to seek validation or approval, but has a purely sociolinguistic function to facilitate understanding, harmonize interaction positions, and build a more intimate and inclusive communication atmosphere so that the interview can continue (Giles, 2016).

## Datum 2

I:[Indonesian] *Kapan belajar bahasa Inggrisnya, sejak kapan?* (When did you learn English, since when?)

R: Oh, dari SD (Elementary School)

I: Oh, <since elementary school?>

In the context of this speech, after seeing the barriers to understanding in previous interactions, the interviewer decided to change his communication strategy by using a language that was more mastered by the respondent. This can be seen when the interviewer asks questions in Indonesian to ask about the duration of the respondent's study. In this datum, the use of the **Code-Switching** category is found.

Code-switching is the use or insertion of other language elements (in this case Indonesian) in a conversation episode to adjust to the context of interaction or the ability of the interlocutor (Giles, 2016). This form of adjustment is carried out by the interviewer through the question "[Indonesian] *Kapan belajar bahasa Inggrisnya, sejak kapan?*" which aims to ensure that the respondent fully understands the substance of the question without the cognitive burden of the foreign language.

There is also a category of **Structural Simplification**. This category is an attempt by the speaker to reduce grammatical complexity so that the message is easier to digest (Giles et al., 1991). This form of simplification appears when the interviewer confirms the respondent's answer. Instead of using grammatically complete question sentences such as "*Did you start learning it since you were in elementary school?*", the interviewer uses a concise elliptical structure, namely

"*since elementary school?*". The elimination of these subjects and predicate elements is done to speed up the confirmation flow in spontaneous interactions.

The two convergence strategies in datum 2 consistently perform the **Social Alignment** function. This social alignment is carried out by the interviewer to create harmony and smooth communication so that the difference in language competence between the two does not hinder the interview process (Giles, 2016). By switching to Indonesian and simplifying the confirmation structure, the interviewer seeks to validate the respondent's answers directly, create convenience, and keep the rhythm of the conversation maintained.

### Datum 3

I: What do you feel to have the ability in speaking english. Is that important for you?  
 R: um..  
 I: is that important for you if, {if you can} speak in english?  
 I: is that important for you?  
 I: [Indonesian] *Penting ga kalau bisa bahasa Inggris?* (It is important to speak English?)

In the context of speech in datum 3, the interviewer asked a long and complex question about how important English language skills were to the respondents. Seeing the respondent who returned to the confusion and only responded with "*um..*", the interviewer immediately performed a series of verbal convergence maneuvers in stages.

The first strategy that emerged was **Lexical Adjustment** in the form of lexical simplification. The interviewer consciously changed the phrase that was too formal and abstract "*to have the ability in speaking english*", to a more common, simple, and familiar form of phrase "*if you can speak in english*". This adjustment



of word choice is made solely to reduce the level of language difficulty so that it is easier to be digested by the opponent (Giles et al., 1991).

The interviewer also performs **Speech Rate Adjustment**. This paralinguistic adjustment is not only in the form of a slowing down in tempo but is characterized by repetition and segmentation of speech. The interviewer breaks down and repeats the question gradually "*is that important for you if...*" then repeats to "*Is that important for you?*". This repetition and segmentation serve to provide a time gap for respondents to be able to process the linguistic information they receive little by little without feeling pressured (Giles, 2016).

However, when lexical and paralinguistic modifications in English still do not yield answers, the interviewer takes the highest accommodative step by implementing **Code-Switching**. The interviewer inserts a direct translation into Indonesian: "*Penting ga kalau bisa bahasa Inggris?* (Is it important to speak English?)". This code transfer is a tangible manifestation of language adjustment to bridge the gap of understanding that cannot be overcome by simply modifying a foreign language (Giles, 2016).

Similar to the previous datum, the entire set of strategies in datum 3 is absolutely driven by the **Social Alignment function**. The series of adjustments from changing vocabulary, repeating sentences, to finally changing languages, shows the interviewer's commitment to aligning himself with the respondent's limitations. This social alignment is actively carried out to ensure that messages can

be conveyed well, the harmony of interactions is maintained, and respondents do not feel intimidated by their own language barriers (Giles, 2016).

#### **Datum 4**

I: you wanna, umm.. let's say get a scholarship abroad? You know a scholarship? [Indonesian] *Beasiswa? Keluar negeri?* (Scholarship? Aboard?)  
 I: <you wanna go to get a scholarship?>

In the context of the speech in datum 4, the interviewer asked if the respondent had the desire to get a scholarship to study abroad. At the beginning of the question, the interviewer realized that the sentence formulation may be unfamiliar or too long for the respondent. This awareness triggers the emergence of **Speech Rate Adjustment**, which is paralinguistically characterized by pauses and markers of hesitation, namely "*umm..*". The interviewer deliberately slows down the tempo of his speech to provide a cognitive pause, both for him to reformulate the question, and for the respondent to process the words that have just been spoken (Giles, 2016).

The interviewer then applied the **Code-Switching** strategy. The interviewer directly inserts the translation into Indonesian: "*Beasiswa? Keluar negeri?* (Scholarship? Aboard?)". This code switching is done as a pragmatic tactic to ensure that the respondent captures the main points of the question before the conversation continues (Giles, 2016).

After providing a bridge of understanding through code switching, the interviewer returns to English by applying **Structural Simplification**. Instead of repeating the initial question using long-winded phrases "*you want, umm.. Let's Say*

*Get a Scholarship Abroad?*", the interviewer trimmed out the unnecessary elements and simplified them into a much more concise, direct, and digestible structure: "*You want to go to get a scholarship?*" (Giles et al., 1991).

The three convergent strategies in datum 4 have one main function, namely **Social Alignment**. The interviewer tries to minimize potential communication impasse by immediately adjusting the tempo, translating key terms, and summarizing the sentence structure. This social alignment is actively carried out to maintain the level of comfort of respondents, show a cooperative attitude towards the limitations of the language of the opponent, and ensure that the flow of interaction continues to run harmoniously (Giles, 2016).

### Datum 5

I: in what grade are you now? <You are senior high school right? In what grade?>

R: umm..

I: [Indonesian] *kelas berapa?* (What grade?)

In the context of the speech in datum 5, the interviewer asked about the respondent's current level of education. Anticipating potential confusion from the initial question "*in what grade are you now?*", the interviewer immediately applied the Structural Simplification strategy. This is marked by the segment "*You are senior high school right? In what grade?*", where the interviewer tactically breaks down the inquiry into shorter, more direct clauses to reduce the respondent's cognitive load.

Despite this **structural simplification**, the series of English questions still seemed to weigh on the cognitive capacity of the respondent, which was shown by

the response in the form of a murmur of doubt "*umm..*". Responding to the impasse, the interviewer adaptively applied the Speech Rate Adjustment strategy. This adjustment can be seen from the slowdown in speech tempo when the interviewer pauses for a moment after seeing the respondent's confused response. This pause paralinguistically functions to provide time allowance for the respondent so that they do not feel pressured when processing questions (Giles, 2016).

Realizing that structural and paralinguistic adjustments alone are not enough to generate answers, the interviewer takes a more straightforward tactical step by applying **Code-Switching**. The interviewer directly discarded the series of English questions and inserted a question in Indonesian, namely "[Indonesian] *kelas berapa?* (What grade?)". The use of this code transfer is carried out as a form of absolute accommodation to ensure that the meaning of the question is truly understood by the respondent, given the limitations of the English vocabulary (Giles, 2016).

The synergy of these three convergence strategies is clearly driven by the Social Alignment function. The interviewer did not force the respondent to parse the complex structure of the English language, but rather actively aligned themselves with the respondent's native language capacity. This **social alignment** proves the interviewer's commitment to maintaining the comfort of the respondents, preventing communication interruptions, and maintaining harmony of interaction during inequality of language skills (Giles, 2016).

### Datum 6

I: What will you take as your major?

I: [Indonesian] *Mau ambil jurusan apa? Nanti kuliah* (What major do you want to take?  
Later in college)

In the context of the speech in datum 6, the interviewer switched to asking about the topic of the respondent's continuing education plan, namely the college major to be taken. After asking the question in English "*What will you take as your major?*", the interviewer proactively anticipates the possibility that the respondent (whose English skills are at a basic level) may not fully understand specific vocabulary such as "major".

As a form of pragmatic anticipation, the interviewer directly applied the **Code-Switching** strategy with a complete translation in Indonesian: "*Mau ambil jurusan apa? nanti kuliah*". This code switching is a very explicit form of language adjustment, where the speaker inserts elements of the opposing mother tongue to ensure that the transmission of the message runs flawlessly without semantic barriers (Giles, 2016).

This code transfer maneuver is specifically driven by the **Social Alignment** function. The interviewer doesn't want to test the respondent's vocabulary skills which can trigger discomfort or a stalemate of the conversation. Instead, the interviewer actively aligns himself with the respondent's linguistic limitations. This social alignment proves that interviewers prioritize the harmony of interaction, ease of understanding, and fluency of the interview over the rigid use of English (Giles, 2016).

### Datum 7

I: What is your favourite lesson in school?

R: umm favorit?

I: lesson

I: [Indonesian] *Pelajaran favorit apa?* (What is your favourite lesson?)

In the context of the speech in datum 7, the interviewer asked the respondents' favorite subjects during school. Hearing the question, the respondent seemed to only catch the word "favorite" and responded with a confused tone "*um favorite?*", indicating that he did not understand the meaning of the word "lesson".

In response to this confusion, the interviewer initially tried to emphasize the word "lesson" but soon realized that the repetition of the foreign word would not be effective. Therefore, the interviewer directly applies the **Code-Switching** strategy. The interviewer inserted a full translation of the question into Indonesian: "*Pelajaran favorit apa?*". The use of code switching at this point serves as a direct accommodation tool to overcome lexical barriers, where the speaker borrows the mother tongue of the speaking opponent so that the message can be perfectly decoded (Giles, 2016).

Just like the previous datum, this quick and tactical code-switching strategy is driven by the **Social Alignment** function. The interviewer does not allow the respondent to get caught up in confusion that can ruin the rhythm of the interaction. By immediately switching to Indonesian, the interviewer actively "went down" to align himself with the respondent's comprehension capacity. This social alignment proves that the interviewer's top priority is to maintain the emotional comfort of the

respondent and ensure the continuity of communication, not just maintaining the use of English (Giles, 2016).

### **Datum 8**

I: What is the difficult thing about english?

I: <is that speaking or grammar?>

I: [Indonesian] *apa yg paling susah tentang bahasa inggris?* (What is the difficult thing about english?)

I: is that speaking or grammar?

In the context of speech in datum 8, the interviewer asked what the most difficult aspect of learning English was. Realizing that responding to an open-ended question can be cognitive overload for respondents who have basic language skills, the immediate interviewer made a comprehensive set of adjustments.

The first strategy that stands out is **Structural Simplification**. The interviewer deliberately simplifies the structural demands of interaction by transforming open-ended questions "*What is the difficult thing about english?*" into limited-choice questions, namely "*is that speaking or grammar?*". This simplification effectively cuts down on the syntactic complexity that the respondent needs to answer, as he does not need to string together his own sentences, but rather simply chooses from the options already provided (Giles et al., 1991).

The interviewer also used the **Code-Switching strategy**. The interviewer inserts a direct translation into Indonesian, "*Apa yg paling susah tentang bahasa inggris?* (What is the difficult thing about english?)". This code switching is carried out as a pragmatic step so that respondents capture the essence of the question

correctly without having to guess the meaning of the foreign vocabulary (Giles, 2016).

Next, the interviewer applies **Speech Rate Adjustment**. This paralinguistic adjustment is realized by slowing down the tempo of speech when repeating the answer option "*is that speaking or grammar?*" at the end of speech. A strategic slowdown in tempo provides cognitive space and pause for respondents to digest the options offered and formulate their answers more calmly (Giles, 2016).

The synergy of the three convergence strategies in the last datum in Video 1 fully performs the **Social Alignment** function. The interviewer not only facilitates the understanding of meaning, but also actively facilitates the way the respondent gives answers. This social alignment proves the interviewer's dedication to creating a safe, cooperative, and free interaction space from linguistic pressure, so that the harmony of communication can be well maintained (Giles, 2016).

## 2. Video 2

In the second video, the respondents met had similar characteristics to the previous video, namely not very proficient in English. This limitation of foreign language vocabulary mastery makes the interviewer must take the initiative again and apply various verbal convergence strategies tactically so that the interaction continues to run smoothly and the intention of the question can be conveyed effectively without making the respondent feel intimidated.



### Datum 9

I: What is your major? [Indonesian] *Jurusan apa?* (What is your major?)

In the context of the speech in datum 9, the interviewer asked about the study program or education major that the respondent was taking. Given the respondent's condition of not being very proficient in English, the interviewer realized that the term "major" may be a vocabulary that is not very familiar to the respondent's ears. As an anticipatory step, the interviewer directly applies **the Code-Switching** strategy.

The interviewer spontaneously connects his English questions with an Indonesian translation: "Jurusan apa?". The use of code switching is a form of straightforward linguistic accommodation, where the speaker inserts elements of the mother tongue of the opposite speaker to ensure the clarity of message transmission and prevent miscommunication (Giles, 2016).

This quick code-switching tactic in datum 9 is clearly driven by the **Social Alignment** function. The interviewer actively modifies his or her language to align with the respondent's level of understanding. This accommodative step is taken solely to create harmony in interactions, maintain the psychological comfort of respondents so as not to feel pressured by language barriers, and ensure that the flow of the interview can continue to flow cooperatively (Giles, 2016).

### Datum 10

I: Oh [Indonesian] *Tata Busana* (Fashion Design) really? I was in [Indonesian] *Tata Busana* (Fashion Design), ya! many years ago, but then I have to.. you know, sign out from my major because I found it was umm.. a bit hard from me to.. you know, like.. I found like a formula, {like numbers to make a [Indonesian] *pola* (pattern)}, [Indonesian] *pola* (pattern) for.. for the dress ya, ya

In the context of the speech in datum 10, the interviewer responded with great enthusiasm after learning that the respondent majored in fashion design. The interviewer then told about his personal experience that he had also studied in the department but eventually resigned. In telling this story, the interviewer extensively used the **Code-Switching** strategy. The interviewer deliberately inserted the term Indonesian "*Tata Busana* (Fashion Design)" and "*pola* (pattern)" during a series of English sentences to adjust to the cultural realities and academic contexts understood by the opponent (Giles, 2016).

The interviewer also applied **Lexical Adjustment** in the form of term reformulation. This can be seen when the interviewer tries to explain the obstacles that led him out of the major. Initially, he used the English term "*formula*" which was still too abstract and general. To ensure that the respondent understood his meaning specifically in the realm of fashion, the interviewer immediately reformulated the term into a much more concrete lexical description, namely "*numbers to make a pola*". This lexical adjustment by breaking down complicated terms into more descriptive phrases ensures that the reference of meaning is conveyed precisely to the respondent (Giles et al., 1991).

Based on CAT analysis, the synergy of verbal convergence in speech specifically performs the function of **Identity Management**. The identity

management function is closely related to how the speaker uses language adjustment to negotiate and project his or her social identity to be recognized as part of an in-group of speakers (Giles, 2016).

By deliberately reformulating the term into "*numbers to make a pattern*", using the local term "*fashion*", and stating intersecting experiences "*I was in fashion, huh!*", the interviewer actively manages his or her interactional identity. He breaks down the hierarchical distance as an "English-speaking interviewer" and projects herself as a fellow individual who has shared the same experiences and difficulties in the department. This strategic step is taken to validate the identity of the respondents, build bonds of solidarity, and create emotional interpersonal closeness in the conversation (Giles, 2016).

### **Datum 11**

I: You cannot find manga in indonesian? umm in {bahasa indonesia?} Why? It, it is hard??

In the context of the speech in datum 11, the interviewer asked whether the respondents had difficulty finding manga comics that had been translated into Indonesian. When asking questions, the interviewer initially used the phrase "*in Indonesian?*". However, the interviewer then gave a paralinguistic pause ("umm") and immediately made a **Lexical Adjustment** by reformulating the phrase to "*in bahasa Indonesia?*".

This lexical adjustment occurs in the form of term reformulation to clarify the reference of meaning. The interviewer anticipated that the term "*Indonesian*" as an adjective/language might sound less common or could trigger ambiguity for respondents with limited English skills. Therefore, he replaced it with the lexical

equivalent of "*bahasa Indonesia*" which is much more familiar and specific to the respondent's ears. This modification of the word choice is done deliberately to clarify the reference to the meaning while reducing the level of language difficulty so that it is easier to be digested by the opponent (Giles et al., 1991).

Functionally, the convergence strategy in datum 11 is driven by **Social Alignment**. The interviewer did not allow any ambiguity gaps that could make the respondent hesitate in answering. By proactively clarifying terms, the interviewer tries to harmonize his communication position to create harmony, as well as ensure that the flow of interaction continues to run smoothly and cooperatively without burdening the cognitive capacity of the respondent (Giles, 2016).

#### **Datum 12**

I: Oh.. the translator? <From japanesse? to indonesian?>

The strategy applied to this speech is **Structural Simplification**. Instead of stringing together a complex and complete interrogative sentence such as "*Are you talking about the translator from Japanese to Indonesian?*", the interviewer deliberately breaks down the sentence structure into very short, segmented frasal question units. The breakdown of the structure into "*Oh.. the translator?*", followed by "*From japanesse?*", and "*to indonesian?*" this is a form of high-level grammatical simplification. The goal is so that linguistic information can be parsed and digested piece by piece by the opponent (Giles et al., 1991).

The act of breaking sentence structure into smaller units is driven by the **Social Alignment** function. The interviewer did not want to "attack" the respondent with a long English sentence. Instead, it guides respondents' understanding

gradually (step by step) to prevent cognitive overload. This social alignment effectively keeps the rhythm of interaction flowing comfortably and harmoniously and ensures that respondents still feel able to follow the direction of the conversation (Giles, 2016).

### 3. Video 3

In the third video, the interviewer met 2 female respondents and one of them showed characteristics of English language skills that were not very proficient or at a basic level. In this video, the interviewer again applies a verbal accommodation strategy to harmonize the level of understanding between himself and the respondent.

#### Datum 13

I: Can you describe it more like, ok I think I want to do it in five years after you graduate?  
 R: umm..  
 I: <haven't think about it>?  
 R: umm.. [Indonesian] *belum sih* (Not yet)  
 I: [indonesian] *oh oke belum di fikirkan?* (Oh okay haven't thought about it yet?) It's okay

In the context of the speech in datum 13, the interviewer initially asked an open-ended and quite complex question about the respondent's future plans after graduation. The respondent showed cognitive difficulties characterized by a murmur "umm.." and a short answer in Indonesian "[Indonesian] *belum sih* (not yet)". Responding to these obstacles, the interviewer immediately made adjustments to save the flow of the conversation.

The first strategy applied is **Structural Simplification**. The interviewer transforms a long, complicated open-ended question at the beginning into a much simpler confirmation sentence: "*haven't think about it?*" This simplification of the structure deliberately removes complex grammatical elements and focuses on the

core of the question so that respondents do not feel burdened in processing the structure of long English sentences

Next, the interviewer applied **Code-Switching** The interviewer switched to Indonesian by saying, "[Indonesian] *oh oke belum di fikirkan?* (oh okay haven't thought about it yet)" This code switching serves as an instant clarification tool to validate the intent of respondents who previously answered in Indonesian, while ensuring that there are no misunderstandings of information in the interaction.

The two convergence strategies in datum 13 are driven by **Social Alignment** The interviewer proactively aligns his position with the respondent's capacity to create harmony and smooth interaction By simplifying the structure and switching to Indonesian, the interviewer tries to minimize linguistic distance and provide a sense of comfort to the respondent so that the interview process continues to run cooperatively despite the constraints of English comprehension.

#### **Datum 14**

I: Do you have difficult things in your major?

R: Umm..

I: <You don't have it? Maybe everything just fine for you? Because you enjoy it?>

In the context of this speech in datum 14, the interviewer asks if the respondent encountered difficulties in the major he or she is taking When the respondent responds with a murmur of "umm." that hints at doubts or difficulties in answering open-ended questions, the interviewer immediately adjusts communication strategies

The strategy applied to this datum is **Structural Simplification** The interviewer transforms from an open-ended question into a series of confirmation

sentences and simpler assumptions: "*You don't have it? Maybe everything just fine for you? Because you enjoy it?*" This simplification of the structure is deliberately designed to minimize the cognitive burden of respondents; Respondents are no longer required to compose complex descriptive answers, but rather simply provide brief confirmation of the assumptions put forward by the interviewer. Based on the theory, this simplification of syntax helps speed up the process of interpreting messages in interactions that have inequality of language competence.

The convergence strategy in datum 14 functions as **Social Alignment**. The interviewer tries to create a smooth interaction by providing answer options that are more accessible to the respondent. This social alignment is carried out to maintain the harmony and comfort of the respondents, so that differences in linguistic abilities do not cause communication impasses but continue to run cooperatively.

#### 4. Video 4

In the fourth video, the respondent is a man who is seen jogging because he is a little panting and wearing sportswear. respondents also have characteristics of English language proficiency that are not very proficient or at a basic level. This limitation makes the interviewer have to be proactive again in using verbal accommodation strategies. The interviewer tries to harmonize his or her speaking style so that the questions asked can still be understood by the respondent without creating excessive linguistic pressure.

### Datum 15

I: Are you in hurry?  
 R: ya?  
 I: Are You in a {rush?}

In the context of speech in datum 15, the interviewer tries to ascertain whether the respondent is in a hurry before starting a further conversation. When the interviewer gave the initial question "*Are you in hurry?*", the respondent replied with "*ya?*" with a questioning intonation, indicating that the respondent did not understand the meaning of the term "*in hurry?*".

Responding to this confusion, the interviewer immediately applied the **Lexical Adjustment** strategy. This lexical adjustment is manifested using synonyms in the same language to reformulate the question. The interviewer replaced the phrase "*in hurry*" with another term that had a similar meaning but may be more familiar to the respondent, namely "*in a rush*". Based on the theory, changing vocabulary choices to simpler or familiar forms is an effort by speakers to reduce social distance and make it easier to understand.

The convergence strategy in datum 15 is driven by **Social Alignment**. The interviewer actively modifies his choice of words to align himself with the respondent's level of vocabulary mastery. This accommodative step is taken to create harmony in the interaction, prevent barriers to understanding at the beginning of the conversation, and ensure that respondents feel comfortable continuing the interview.



### Datum 16

I: <Ok, Student of junior high school?>

In the context of the speech in datum 16, the interviewer is trying to confirm the respondent's educational status. Because respondents have limited English language skills, the interviewer automatically avoids using long and complex question sentence structures.

The strategy applied to this datum is **Structural Simplification**. This adjustment is evident using an elliptical structure, in which the interviewer deliberately omits essential grammatical elements, such as auxiliary verbs and subject e.g. from the standard form "*Are you a student of junior high school?*". The omission of this grammatical element is done to simplify the delivery of syntax so that respondents can immediately grasp the main points of the confirmation question

The application of this structural simplification is driven by the **Social Alignment** function. The interviewer modifies his or her speech to align with the respondent's cognitive capacity at the basic level. By using a concise and compact structure, the interviewer creates harmony in the interaction, reduces the language processing burden for respondents, and ensures smooth communication without the need to be hampered by the complexity of formal grammar.

### Datum 17

I: So, what is your dream job?

R: [Indonesian] *aku pengen jadi tambang sih* (I want to be a miner anyway)

I: <Oh, working in mining>

In the context of the speech in datum 17, the interviewer asked about the respondent's dream job. The respondent replied in Indonesian that he wanted to

work in the mining sector "[Indonesian] *aku pengen jadi tambang sih* (I want to be a miner anyway)". Hearing the answer, the interviewer gave a confirmatory response to ensure that his understanding was correct.

The strategy applied to this datum is **Structural Simplification**. This adjustment is seen through the transformation of speech into a short form of confirmation with a compacted structure. Instead of using a complete formal question sentence such as "*Oh, so you mean you want to be working in the mining industry?*", the interviewer simplifies it to "*Oh, working in mining?*". Based on the theory, this syntax simplification is carried out to facilitate the flow of information and speed up the process of validating messages in spontaneous interactions (Giles et al., 1991).

Functionally, this strategy is driven by **Social Alignment**. By simplifying the sentence structure when confirming, the interviewer tries to align himself with the respondent's casual and direct speaking style. This social alignment serves to maintain the harmony of communication, shows that the interviewer listens well, and creates a comfortable conversation atmosphere without feeling rigid or too formal (Giles, 2016).

### **Datum 18**

I: Are you fasting today?  
 R: Oh.. Fast? Runing?  
 I: <Ah I mean Fasting>, [Indonesian] *puasa* (fasting)

In the context of the speech in datum 18, the interviewer asked if the respondent was fasting. However, there was a semantic misunderstanding where the respondent thought the word "fast" referred to speed. This was triggered by the

context of the situation in the video where the respondent was wearing sportswear and was doing jogging activities. The respondent associated the word "fast" with "running". Realizing this shift in meaning, the interviewer immediately adjusted correctly the respondent's understanding.

The first strategy applied is **Structural Simplification**. This adjustment can be seen in the use of elliptical shapes when providing clarifications. The interviewer does not rephrase long question sentences, but trims the grammatical elements into one keyword, namely "*I mean Fasting*". Based on the theory, the use of this condensed structure aims to isolate the word in question so that respondents can focus on the correct term without being disturbed by other sentence structures (Giles et al., 1991).

In addition to simplifying the structure, the interviewer also applied **Code-Switching**. The interviewer tactically inserted the equivalent of the word in Indonesian, namely "*Puasa* (Fasting)". This code switching is a very effective accommodation step to break the ambiguity of meaning between "fast" and "puasa", so that respondents who have limited English vocabulary can immediately grasp the true meaning through their mother tongue (Giles, 2016).

Functionally, the synergy of the strategy in this datum is driven by **Social Alignment**. The interviewer proactively aligns himself with the respondent's logic of thinking in the context of exercising. This social alignment is carried out to instantly correct miscommunication without cornering the respondents, so that the harmony of interaction is maintained and communication can return to the right track (Giles, 2016).

## B. Discussion

The data in the previous sub-chapter show the findings of research on the strategies and functions of verbal convergence in "*English on the Street*" interactions in depth using the framework of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT). Of the total data analyzed, the most dominant form of verbal convergence emerged was the Language Choice strategy in the form of Code-Switching and Linguistic Adjustment in the form of Structural Simplification. Meanwhile, the function that dominantly drives most of the convergent speech is Social Alignment.

The dominance of this strategy and function can be explained through the context of the interaction, namely spontaneous street interviews on TikTok. This phenomenon reflects what is identified in CAT as downward convergence. In this context, a speaker with higher language competence (the interviewer) deliberately lowers his or her language level to be in harmony with his or her interlocutor who has lower competence for the sake of efficiency. Interviewers are often confronted with respondents with basic English language skills. When responding to complex English questions, respondents often exhibit cognitive overload characterized by doubt.

This was recorded consistently in Datum 1, 3, 5, 13, and 14, where respondents responded with a murmur of "*umm...*" before finally the interviewer modifies his speech. These non-verbal signs and pauses serve as a cue for the interviewer to adjust immediately so that communication failures can be minimized. Confusion of lexical meaning also occurs frequently, as in Datum 18. When the

interviewer asked, "*Are you fasting today?*", the respondent who was exercising misinterpreted the word "fasting" as running speed, responding to a statement indicating confusion, "*Oh... Fast? Running?*". To correct the misunderstanding, the interviewer immediately made a correction through simplification and code switching by saying, "*Ah I mean Fasting, Puasa (fasting)*".

Efforts to keep the flow of the conversation so that it does not get awkward in front of the camera is a tangible manifestation of the Social Alignment function. Empirical evidence suggests that Structural Simplification is used massively to remove grammatical elements of the English language that could potentially overwhelm respondents' processing of information. For example, in Datum 4, instead of maintaining a long structure: "*you want, umm... let's say get a scholarship abroad? You know a scholarship? Beasiswa? Ke luar negeri? (Scholarship? Abroad?)*", the interviewer tactically cuts it down to "*you want to go to get a scholarship?*". A similar analysis is seen in Datum 12, where the interviewer simplifies his question to an elliptical structure (discards the subject and auxiliary verbs): "*Oh... The translator? From Japanese? to Indonesian?*". This abandonment of formal grammatical elements has proven to be effective in making information easier for street respondents to process, while strengthening social bonds in such inclusive interactions.

When simplifying the structure is not enough, the interviewer consistently uses Code-Switching to Indonesian. Instead of allowing the awkward silence, the interviewer directly inserted a translation such as "*Kelas berapa? (What grade?)*" (Datum 5), "*Mau ambil jurusan apa? Nanti kuliah (What major do you want to*

take? For college later)" (Datum 6), "*Pelajaran favorit apa?* (What is your favorite subject?)" (Datum 7), and "*Jurusan apa?* (What major?)" (Datum 9). The use of Code-Switching serves to ensure that messages can be decoded precisely by respondents before the flow of the conversation reaches a dead end.

The findings of this study also show that Lexical Adjustment and Speech Rate Adjustment are rarely used forms of convergence. The lack of frequency of these two strategies shows a significant difference (gap) when compared to the studies of Salsabila (2022) on corporate interactions and Indriani (2021) on family conversations. In the previous study, the adjustment of word choice and the slowing down of the tempo of speech were the main strategies because the participants had flexibility in interaction time. In contrast, in the context of TikTok, interaction is tied by a short video duration. In line with the findings of Rifaldi and Sinduwiatmo (2025) on @megamustikasundari2 accounts, creators are required to perform quick verbal maneuvers to maintain audience engagement. Therefore, rather than making slow lexical or paralinguistic adjustments, the interviewer prefers shortcuts through Structural Simplification and Code-Switching that have an instant impact to save interaction (Social Alignment).

The function of verbal convergence that is not found at all in the data of this study is Social Approval. The absence of this function can be explained through the concept of asymmetry of linguistic power in CAT. Giles (2016) states that individuals modify their speaking style to seek validation if they are in a subordinate position. Because the interviewer holds language authority and control of interactions, he or she does not have the psychological need to be validated by the

respondent. This finding provides *novelty* to the findings of Krisnuwardhana and Arimi (2025), where foreign speakers use convergence precisely to seek communal acceptance (Social Approval).

The least common convergence function is Identity Management, which is found on only one piece of data in Datum 10 through speech: "*Oh tata busana (Fashion design) really? I was in tata busana, ya! many years ago...*". The lack of frequency of this function shows an interesting contrast when compared to the research of Immanuel et al. (2025) on the gaming community. Immanuel found that online communities massively use convergence to reinforce in-group identity. In contrast, in "*English on the Street*", the interaction is instant and public, so the interviewer prioritizes social alignment to get the message across rather than deep cultural identity negotiations.

The Language Shifting strategy as a full convergence representation does not appear at all in the findings of this study data. Although the respondents experienced a real language barrier, the interviewer retained English as the main structure and only performed partial convergence by inserting Indonesian as a companion, as in Datum 9 "*What is your major? Jurusan apa? (What major?)*" and Datum 13 "*oh oke belum di fikirkan? (not thought about it yet?) It's okay*". This practice provides novelty when compared to the study of Rifaldi and Sinduwiatmo (2025) on the @megamustikasundari2 account; if the creator is free to maximize convergence for the sake of engagement, the "*English on the Street*" interviewer draws the limits of convergence. This phenomenon theoretically confirms the combined argument of Gallois et al. (2005) and Sachdev & Bourhis (2005), that

speakers in multilingual environments will reject full convergence and limit themselves to partial convergence if it threatens the integrity of the functional role and the existence of the professional identity they represent.

Overall, the verbal convergence in "*English on the Street*" interactions shows a deliberate balance between ease of communication and guarding the role of the speaker. The dominance of Social Alignment proves that the main focus lies in helping comprehension when there are differences in language skills. The absence of Social Approval and the reluctance to do Language Shifting confirm that accommodation is done with careful consideration to keep communication inclusive without sacrificing professional identity and clarity of content concepts. These findings reinforce the main idea in Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) that human interaction is adaptive but still influenced by social and institutional contexts.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter presents the conclusions of the analysis of the strategies and functions of verbal convergence in TikTok content "*English on the Street*". All findings are summarized to answer the formulation of the research problem, followed by suggestions aimed at future researchers who have an interest in sociolinguistic studies, especially in the framework of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT).

#### A. Conclusion

Verbal convergence in "*English on the Street*" content becomes a strategic and planned linguistic maneuver. The dominant strategy found was the simplification of structure and code switching, which played a role in bridging the language gap between interviewers and respondents. Meanwhile, strategies that are rarely used are lexical adjustments and speech tempos, to maintain the efficiency of digital interactions. The interviewer also sets firm convergence boundaries by avoiding language shifting entirely to maintain the institutional role and identity of English-language content.

Social Alignment is a function that dominates interactions to ensure smooth messaging and minimize friction, while Identity Management only appears in a limited way as a situational variation. The Social Approval function was not found at all because the interviewer did not seek social validation from the respondent. This practice of verbal convergence in spontaneous digital public

interaction ultimately acts as a practical strategy to create inclusive communication while maintaining the identity of the speaker.

### **B. Suggestion**

Further research is suggested to explore the phenomenon of verbal convergence in various other more interactive digital content genres to test whether the accommodation constraints found in this study also apply to different online communication contexts. In addition, subsequent researchers can expand the scope of the analysis utterances, words, phrases, and sentences produced by the audience to understand how linguistic accommodation efforts undertaken by content creators are perceived by audiences on social media.

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## CURRICULUM VITAE



Lauro'at Hidayatul Faroha was born on January 13, 2004. She completed her secondary education at MAS Al-Aziz Dampit, where she served as the Student Council President. She continued studying English Literature at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, where she serves as the Chairperson of the English Literature Student Association (HMPS), Secretary General of the Faculty Student Senate (SEMA-F), and Treasurer of the University Student Senate (SEMA-U). She also participates in external organizational activities as the Coordinator of the KOPRI PMII Rayon Perjuangan Ibnu Aqil Women's Cadre Resource Development Bureau.



## APPENDICES

A. *English on the Street Data*

## VIDEO 1 (12/08/2025)

| Data | Time Stamp  | Dialogue                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Verbal Convergence    |    |                           |                 |    | Function        |                  |                     | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----|---------------------------|-----------------|----|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|      |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Linguistic Adjustment |    | Paralinguistic Adjustment | Language Choice |    | Social Approval | Social Alignment | Identity Management |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|      |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | LA                    | SS | SR                        | CS              | LS |                 |                  |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1    | 0:18 – 0:41 | I: When did you learn it?<br>I: I mean {learn English}<br>R: um...<br>I: <When did you learn English?><br>R: Oh um...<br>I: {Learn English}<br>R: Yes<br>I: <When you were still elementary school? You learned English?> | ✓                     | ✓  | ✓                         |                 |    |                 | ✓                |                     | The interviewer showed Speech Rate Adjustment by slowing down the tempo when repeating the question, then there is also a lexical adjustment in the form of lexical clarification when the interviewer changes the general reference "learn it" to "learn English" explicitly. Structural simplification is seen when a sentence is changed from a complete question form to a simpler, more segmented structure, with the removal of certain grammatical elements as well as changes to the form of confirmation. |

|   |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |   |   |   |   |  |  |   |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | 0:41 – 0:47 | I:[Indonesian]<br><i>Kapan belajar bahasa Inggrisnya, sejak kapan?</i><br>R: Oh, dari SD<br>I: <Oh, since elementary school?>                                                                                                                                                   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |  |  | ✓ |  | There is a language choice using Indonesian in the initial question. Then, there is a structural simplification of the simplified form of confirmation into an elliptical structure.                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 3 | 0:47 – 1:01 | I: What do you feel to have the ability in speaking english. Is that important for you?<br>R: um..<br>I: <u>is that important for you if {if you can} speak in english?</u><br>I: <u>is that important for you?</u><br>I: [Indonesian]<br>Penting ga kalau bisa bahasa Inggris? | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ |  |  | ✓ |  | The interviewer showed Speech Rate Adjustment which was characterized by repetition and segmentation of speech. And there is a lexical adjustment in the form of lexical simplification from more formal and complex phrases to simpler and more commonly used forms. In addition, there is a language choice through the switch to Bahasa Indonesia. |
| 4 | 1:12 – 1:18 | I: <u>you wanna umm.. let's say get a scholarship abroad?</u> You know a scholarship?                                                                                                                                                                                           |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |  | ✓ |  | Speech Rate Adjustment can be seen from pauses and hesitation (umm...) which indicates a slowdown in tempo before the interviewer reformulates the question. Structural                                                                                                                                                                               |

|   |             |                                                                                                                                                            |  |   |   |   |  |  |   |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   |             | [Indonesian]<br><i>Beasiswa?</i><br><i>Keluar negeri?</i><br>I: <i>you wanna go to get a scholarship?</i>                                                  |  |   |   |   |  |  |   |  | simplification can be seen from simplifying the structure of the question to be more direct. Language choice in the form of code-switching to Indonesian                                                                                                                            |
| 5 | 1:25 – 1:30 | I: <u>in what grade are you now?</u><br>≤ <u>You are senior high school right? In what grade?</u> ><br>R: umm..<br>I: [Indonesian]<br><i>kelas berapa?</i> |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |  | ✓ |  | The interviewer displays Speech Rate Adjustment by slowing down the tempo. And interviewer made a structural simplification through changing the question into a simpler and more confirmatory form. Then language choice in the form of code-switching from English to Indonesian. |
| 6 | 1:35 – 1:40 | I: What will you take as your major?<br>I: [Indonesian]<br><i>Mau ambil jurusan apa?</i><br><i>Nanti kuliah</i>                                            |  |   |   | ✓ |  |  | ✓ |  | The interviewer does code switching to Indonesian as a form of language choice                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 7 | 1:51 – 1:58 | I: What is your favourite lesson in school?<br>R: umm favorit?<br>I: lesson<br>I: [Indonesian]<br><i>Pelajaran favorit apa?</i>                            |  |   |   | ✓ |  |  | ✓ |  | The interviewer made a language choice in the form of code-switching from English to Indonesian.                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 8 | 2:10 – 2:15 | I: What is the difficult thing about english?                                                                                                              |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |  | ✓ |  | The interviewer showed Speech Rate Adjustment by slowing down the tempo when repeating                                                                                                                                                                                              |

|  |  |                                                                                                                                                   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | I: <is that speaking or grammar?><br>I: [Indonesian] <i>apa yg paling susah tentang bahasa inggris?</i><br>I: <u>is that speaking or grammar?</u> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | the question “is that speaking or grammar?”. And she made structural simplification through the transformation of open-ended questions into limited-choice questions. In addition, there are language choice in the form of code-switching from English to Indonesian. |
|--|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## VIDEO 2 (21/06/2025)

| Data | Time Stamp  | Dialogue                                                                                                                                                                            | Verbal Convergence    |    |                           |                 |    | Function        |                  |                     | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----|---------------------------|-----------------|----|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|      |             |                                                                                                                                                                                     | Linguistic Adjustment |    | Paralinguistic Adjustment | Language Choice |    | Social Approval | Social Alignment | Identity Management |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|      |             |                                                                                                                                                                                     | LA                    | SS | SR                        | CS              | LS |                 |                  |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 9    | 0:20 – 0:23 | I: What is your major?<br>[Indonesian] <i>Jurusan apa?</i>                                                                                                                          |                       |    |                           | ✓               |    |                 | ✓                |                     | Language choice is seen in the repetition of questions in Indonesian after they are submitted in English.                                                                                                                          |
| 10   | 0:29 – 0:52 | I: Oh<br>[Indonesian] <i>tata busana</i> really? I was in<br>[inodonesian] <i>tata busana</i> , ya! many years ago, but then I have to.. you know, sign out from my major because I | ✓                     |    |                           | ✓               |    |                 |                  | ✓                   | Lexical adjustment is seen in the reformulation of terms from a more abstract form to a more concrete form in the same language. Language choice can be seen in the insertion of Indonesian terms in a series of English speeches. |

|    |             |                                                                                                                                                                                              |   |   |  |  |  |  |   |  |                                                                                                                   |
|----|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |             | found it was umm.. a bit hard from me to.. you know, like.. I found like a formula, {like numbers to make a [Indonesian] <i>pola</i> ,} [Indonesian] <i>pola</i> for.. for the dress ya, ya, |   |   |  |  |  |  |   |  |                                                                                                                   |
| 11 | 1:30 – 1:35 | I: You cannot find manga in indonesian? umm {in bahasa indonesia?} Why? It, it is hard?                                                                                                      | ✓ |   |  |  |  |  | ✓ |  | Lexical adjustment is seen in the reformulation of terms to clarify the reference of meaning in the same language |
| 12 | 1:39 – 1:42 | Oh.. the translator? <From japanesse? to indonesian?>                                                                                                                                        |   | ✓ |  |  |  |  | ✓ |  | Structural simplification is seen in breaking down the structure into shorter, segmented question units.          |

**VIDEO 3 (08/09/2025)**

| Data | Time Stamp  | Dialogue                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Verbal Convergence    |    |                           |                 |    | Function        |                  |                     | Explanation |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----|---------------------------|-----------------|----|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|      |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Linguistic Adjustment |    | Paralinguistic Adjustment | Language Choice |    | Social Approval | Social Alignment | Identity Management |             |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|      |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | LA                    | SS | SR                        | CS              | LS |                 |                  |                     |             |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 13   | 0:42 – 0:55 | I: Can you describe it more like, ok I think I want to do it in five years after you graduate?<br>R: umm..<br>I: <haven't think about it?><br>R: umm..[Indonesian] <i>belum sih</i><br>I: [indonesian] <i>oh oke belum di fikirkan? It's okay</i> |                       | ✓  |                           |                 | ✓  |                 |                  | ✓                   |             | There is structural simplification through the transformation of complex questions into simpler forms of confirmation. And there is a language choice through the switch to Bahasa Indonesia. |
| 14   | 1:07 – 1:18 | I: do you have difficult things in your major?<br>R: umm..<br>I: <you don't have it? Maybe everything just fine for you? Because you enjoy it?>                                                                                                   |                       | ✓  |                           |                 |    |                 |                  | ✓                   |             | There is structural simplification through the transformation of open-ended questions into simpler forms of confirmation and assumptions                                                      |

**Video 4 (21/02/2026)**

| Data | Time Stamp  | Dialogue                                                                                                             | Verbal Convergence    |    |                           |                 |    | Function        |                  |                     | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----|---------------------------|-----------------|----|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|      |             |                                                                                                                      | Linguistic Adjustment |    | Paralinguistic Adjustment | Language Choice |    | Social Approval | Social Alignment | Identity Management |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|      |             |                                                                                                                      | LA                    | SS | SR                        | CS              | LS |                 |                  |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 15   | 0:05 – 0:07 | I: Are you in hurry?<br>R: ya?<br>I: Are You in a {rush}?                                                            | ✓                     |    |                           |                 |    |                 | ✓                |                     | Lexical adjustment is seen in the use of synonyms in the same language to reformulate the question.                                                                                           |
| 16   | 0:12 – 0:13 | I: <Student of junior high school?>                                                                                  |                       | ✓  |                           |                 |    |                 | ✓                |                     | Structural simplification is seen in the use of elliptical structures with the elimination of grammatical elements.                                                                           |
| 17   | 0:18 – 0:26 | I: So, what is your dream job?<br>R: [Indonesian] <i>aku pengen jadi tambang sihh</i><br>I: <Oh, working in mining?> |                       | ✓  |                           |                 |    |                 | ✓                |                     | Structural simplification is seen in the transformation into a form of brief confirmation with a compacted structure.                                                                         |
| 18   | 1:17 – 1:21 | I: Are you fasting today?<br>R: Oh.. Fast?<br>Runing?<br>I: <Ah I mean Fasting>,<br>[Indonesian] <i>Puasa</i>        |                       | ✓  |                           |                 | ✓  |                 | ✓                |                     | Structural simplification is seen in the use of elliptical shapes in clarification. Language choice is seen in the form of code switching with a switch to Indonesian in a series of speeches |

## B. Transcriptions Symbols

| No. | Symbols                   | Meanings                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | <u>Dashed Underline</u>   | Dashed Underline indicates the specific part of the speech used as the basis to calculate and analyze the speech rate.                                                           |
| 2.  | {Curly Bracket}           | Curly Bracket is used to highlight specific words or phrases that indicate a lexical adjustment made by the speaker during the conversation.                                     |
| 3.  | <Angle Bracket>           | Angle Bracket marks segments of the speech that demonstrate structural simplification, showing how the speaker simplifies the sentence structure.                                |
| 4.  | [Indonesia] and<br>italic | Square brackets containing a language and italic indicate the exact point where the speaker performs code-switching into that specific language (e.g., switching to Indonesian). |
| 5.  | I                         | Interviewer                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 6.  | R                         | Respondent                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 7.  | LA                        | Lexical Adjustment                                                                                                                                                               |
| 8.  | SS                        | Structural Simplification                                                                                                                                                        |
| 9.  | SR                        | Speech Rate Adjustment                                                                                                                                                           |
| 10. | CS                        | Code Switching                                                                                                                                                                   |