MIKAILALSYS
Journal of Multidisciplinary Sciences

e-ISSN : 2987-2286
p-ISSN : 2987-3924

Index: Harvard, Boston, Sydney, Copernicus, Sinta 4, Scilit, Semantic, Google, etc

https://doi.org/10.58578/mikailalsys.v4i2.10900

Meaning Negotiation and Linguistic Adaptation of Arabic Language Learners on Social Media

Very Erawanto[1], Jamila Wijayanti[2], Muhammad Farih[3]
[1,2]Unversitas Brawijaya, Indonesia; [3]Universitas Kiai Abdullah Faqih Gresik, Indonesia
very.erawanto@ub.ac.id; jamilawijayanti@ub.ac.id

Article Info:

Submitted:	Revised:	Accepted:	Published:
May 15, 2026	Jun 12, 2026	Jun 24, 2026	Jun 29, 2026

Abstract

The advancement of digital technology has transformed communication practices, particularly through TikTok, which facilitates audio-visual synchronous discourse in contemporary digital interaction. This study aims to analyze patterns of Arabic language errors on TikTok and examine the linguistic dynamics that emerge within the digital communication ecosystem. A qualitative descriptive design with a digital ethnography approach was employed. Data were collected through non-participant observation of synchronous interactions on TikTok. The findings indicate that Arabic language errors, encompassing morphological, syntactic, lexical, and phonetic aspects, do not occur randomly but form systematic patterns influenced by Indonesian as the users' native language, the demand for rapid digital communication, and the incorporation of dialectal forms through popular culture. The study further reveals that such errors should not be viewed solely as pathological linguistic phenomena but also as forms of linguistic adaptation and collaborative meaning negotiation. In digital spaces, language errors are frequently normalized by user communities as part of identity expression and communicative creativity. This study concludes that Arabic language errors on TikTok reflect the dynamic interaction between

Mikailalsys is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

language structure, digital culture, and social identity formation. The findings contribute to digital linguistics and Arabic language pedagogy by emphasizing the need for more contextual language instruction and critical digital literacy, enabling users to distinguish between creative linguistic variation and structural language degradation.

Keywords: Arabic Language Errors; Critical Digital Literacy; Digital Linguistics; Linguistic Adaptation; TikTok

INTRODUCTION

The advancement of digital technology has fundamentally transformed human communication practices. Social media platforms like TikTok, which prioritize audio-visual-based synchronous discourse, have shifted communication patterns from formal-linear structures toward more rapid, multimodal, and contextual interactions (Istiqomah et al., 2025; Supia et al., 2025; Uluum et al., 2025). This dynamic has significant implications for language use, where the demand for instant communication often triggers simplification, cross-linguistic interference, and structural errors (Arsiwan, 2025; Novita et al., 2025). This phenomenon highlights a shift in linguistic norms, particularly in the use of foreign languages such as Arabic (Situmorang, 2025; Ulya, 2024).

From a digital linguistics perspective, this condition reflects the complexity of language production and reception, where language serves not merely as a communication tool but as a dynamic medium for expressing social identity (Ameria et al., 2026; Azhari et al., 2025; Hutabarat et al., 2025; Masfufah et al., 2026; Wati et al., 2026). Social media has become an active space for linguistic production and reproduction, where users frequently create new linguistic variations that deviate from standard rules for the sake of communicative efficiency (Novita et al., 2025; Nurrahma et al., 2025). This phenomenon necessitates deeper linguistic inquiry to understand the transformation of meaning and structure within a contemporary communication ecosystem that prioritizes speed over linguistic accuracy (Neyarasmi & Musyawir, 2025).

While existing research on linguistic phenomena on TikTok is abundant, much of it remains focused on specific areas. Sari et al. (2025) highlighted how Generation Z utilizes *an-naḥt* (word formation) to construct identity, while Adelia et al. (2026) and Sirait et al. (2026) affirmed that code-switching serves as an adaptive strategy in digital communication.

However, the vast majority of these studies are dominated by Indonesian or English linguistics, whereas research on Arabic language errors in digital contexts remains limited (Judijanto et al., 2025; Marta et al., 2025; Saragih & Napitupulu, 2026). Furthermore, previous studies have generally been descriptive and have failed to critically examine how synchronous discourse on TikTok shapes, reproduces, and deconstructs Arabic language errors as a digital linguistic phenomenon.

This study offers novelty through an analysis of real-time (synchronous) interaction, an area that remains underexplored in digital linguistics. By integrating digital linguistic theory and linguistic analysis, this research systematically maps error patterns within synchronous discourse. This approach contributes to a better understanding of the dynamics of the Arabic language in the evolving global digital space, which demands a more comprehensive theoretical framework. The focus of this study lies in the deconstruction of Arabic language errors in synchronous TikTok discourse. This is crucial as language errors not only impact communication quality but also influence meaning negotiation and broader language learning. Therefore, this study aims to identify emerging Arabic error patterns and analyze their impact on the quality of discourse in real-time interactions on the platform.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of linguistic phenomena within their natural context. This approach enables the researcher not only to classify types of language errors but also to critically interpret how synchronous interaction triggers such linguistic deviations (Ilham et al., 2025; Setiyani et al., 2026).

The research utilizes a qualitative descriptive design. This design was selected to objectively and systematically describe the forms of Arabic language deviations emerging in synchronous discourse on TikTok, as well as to uncover the underlying factors influencing these deviations through narrative and interpretive analysis.

The participants in this study are TikTok users engaged in synchronous Arabic discourse. The sampling technique employed is purposive sampling, wherein data are selected based on criteria of Arabic language interactions containing potential linguistic errors, ensuring the data are relevant to the objective of deconstructing language errors.

The primary instrument in this study is the researcher (human instrument), supported by non-participant digital observation techniques (*digital ethnography*). Data collection was conducted using the "listen and note" (*simak dan catat*) method, in which the researcher downloaded and transcribed synchronous interactions containing linguistic deviations over a specific duration to be categorized as research data (Delli Paoli & D'Auria, 2025; Li & Huang, 2025).

RESULTS

Characteristics of Arabic Language Errors in Synchronous Discourse

Data obtained from the content analysis of TikTok videos on the @ahmadelfarra account reveal various forms of Arabic language errors emerging in synchronous interactions between the host (Ahmad) and the guest (Sinta). These errors are not random; rather, they exhibit specific patterns reflecting the cognitive trade-offs in digital spaces, where users prioritize communicative speed and fluency over grammatical precision. Based on morphological, syntactic, lexical-semantic, and phonetic-orthographic analysis, the errors can be classified into the following categories:

1. **Morphological Errors (Ṣarf) Morphological errors are a dominant finding in this research, specifically in word forms that deviate from standard taṣrīf (inflection) rules due to the pressure of real-time response.**

o **Gender Marker Omission in *Fi'il Māḍī*:** The female speaker uttered the phrase *"أنا ذهب"* (*anā dhahaba*), utilizing the masculine verb form instead of the required feminine *"أنا ذَهَبْتُ"* (*anā dhahabtu*). This error reflects direct interference from the Indonesian language—which lacks a gender system for verbs—prioritized by the speaker to avoid the cognitive load of morphological conjugation during a rapid exchange.

o **Omission of *'Āmil* in *Fi'il Muḍāri'*:** The speaker frequently produced incomplete verb combinations. For instance, uttering the verb *"أتكلّمُ"* (*atakallamu*) without the preceding *'āmil nāṣib* (the subjunctive particle أن), thereby failing to formulate the grammatically required

fatḥah state (e.g., *an atakallama*). This demonstrates a tendency to drop grammatical connectors to maintain conversational flow.

o

2. Syntactic Errors (Naḥwu)

o **Errors in Verbalizing *I'rāb* (Grammatical Inflection):** The speakers tended to treat nouns as *mabnī* (fixed) or applied incorrect phonetic endings, ignoring their actual syntactic positions in the sentence. For example, when uttering the sentence *"أنا طالبة في جامعة شريف هداية الله الإسلامية"*, the speaker failed to apply the *majrūr* (genitive) case. Instead of correctly vocalizing the *kasrah* after the preposition *fī* (i.e., *fī jāmi'ati*), the speaker mispronounced the case ending. This proves that in synchronous discourse, users focus heavily on lexical retrieval rather than precise syntactic vocalization.

o **Redundant Sentence Structure (*Tarkīb*):** An anomalous and forced expression, *"شكرا لان للمشاهدة"* (*shukran li'anna li al-mushāhadah*), was identified. The speaker improperly combined the conjunction *"لأن"* (*li'anna*) with the prepositional phrase *"للمشاهدة"* (*li al-mushāhadah*). A structurally accurate construction would be *"شكراً لكم على المشاهدة"* (*shukran lakum 'alā al-mushāhadah*). This structural overlap occurs when a speaker attempts to construct sentences spontaneously without prior drafting.

3. Lexical-Semantic Errors

o **Use of Dialectal Vocabulary (*'Āmmiyyah*):** The guest spontaneously used the word *"عاوزة"* (*'āwizah*)—an Egyptian colloquial term—instead of the standard *fuṣḥā* word *"أريد"* (*urīdu*). This emergence of dialectal interference indicates that popular media culture heavily influences the linguistic repertoire of Arabic learners, blurring the lines between standard and spoken Arabic in digital spaces.

o **Inappropriate Use of *Adāt al-Ṭalab*:** The particle *"لان"* was used as an informal, phonetically reduced form of *"لأن"*, stripping away the necessary grammatical components for the sake of typing or speaking efficiency.

4. Phonetic-Orthographic Errors

o **Mispronunciation of *Ḥalqiyyah* (Guttural) Letters:** Difficulty in articulating guttural sounds such as *'ain* (ع), *khā'* (خ), and *ḥā'* (ح) was evident when the speakers rapidly pronounced words like *"شائع"* (*shā'i'*), *"آخر"* (*ākhir*), and *"متحمسة"* (*mutaḥammasah*).

o **Vocalization Errors (*Waqf* Application):** To avoid the complexity of *I'rāb* calculation, the speakers consistently neglected the articulation of final *ḥarakāt* (diacritics). They opted to stop (*waqf*) at the end of almost every word, vocalizing them with a *sukūn* (absence of a vowel). This is a primary adaptive strategy employed to sustain rapid communication without risking explicit grammatical errors.

DISCUSSION

Building upon the findings regarding the characteristics of language errors presented in the previous section, this discussion explores these phenomena through the lens of digital linguistics theory. The analysis focuses on the underlying triggers and the deconstruction of these errors as part of contemporary communication dynamics.

1. Unveiling the Digital Ecosystem: An Analysis of Error Dynamics

The results indicate that Arabic language errors within synchronous discourse on TikTok are not merely individual failures but rather manifestations of a complex digital ecosystem. A dominant pattern of interference-both from the native language (Indonesian) and foreign languages (Arabic)-drives irregularities in morphological and syntactic structures. The pressure for speed in real-time interaction leads speakers to prioritize communicative flow over grammatical control, often resulting in structural reduction and repetitive self-repair. Furthermore, the findings regarding the use of the Egyptian dialect suggest that the boundary between *fusha* (Standard Arabic) and *'ammiyyah* (colloquial) has become increasingly blurred, where lexical errors emerge as products of popular culture incorporation.

2. Dialoguing with Digital Discourse: Literature Perspectives and Deviations

This study's findings align strongly with previous literature while offering more critical insights. The use of code-switching as an adaptive strategy confirms the findings of Adelia et al. (2026) and Sirait et al. (2026), suggesting that code-switching is a functional strategy for identity construction in digital communication. The prioritization of communicative speed over linguistic accuracy aligns with the arguments of Neyarasmi and Musyawir (2025), while the observed structural simplification resonates with the warnings raised by Novita et al. (2025).

Furthermore, the successful negotiation of meaning despite grammatical errors-facilitated by multimodal elements-reinforces the view that digital communication is inherently multimodal and contextual (Istiqomah et al., 2025; Supia et al., 2025; Uluum et al., 2025). This is further supported by Masfufah et al. (2026), who highlight the role of "language games" on TikTok as a means of meaning negotiation. However, this study extends beyond previous descriptive research (e.g., Judijanto et al., 2025; Marta et al., 2025; Saragih & Napitupulu, 2026) by demonstrating that these errors are not isolated occurrences. The findings confirm an active process of linguistic reproduction, where variations deviating from standard rules (Sari et al., 2025; Ulya, 2024) are communally normalized for the sake of efficiency and the expression of dynamic social identities (Ameria et al., 2026; Hutabarat et al., 2025; Nurrahma et al., 2025; Wati et al., 2026).

3. Pedagogical and Literacy Implications in the Digital Age

This research carries significant implications for two primary sectors. First, in Arabic language pedagogy, the findings suggest that digital-era instruction must adapt by shifting focus from pure grammatical accuracy toward the enhancement of contextual communicative competence. Educators and practitioners should recognize that errors in digital interactions are often performative (identity-driven) and adaptive. Second, regarding digital literacy, this study emphasizes that the normalization of errors in digital spaces may influence the linguistic standards of young learners. Consequently, a more critical literacy strategy is required to assist users in distinguishing between creative linguistic variation and fundamental structural degradation.

4. Research Constraints and Directions for Future Inquiry

This study is limited by its data scope, which focused on synchronous interaction between a host and a guest, and thus cannot generalize linguistic behavior across the broader

TikTok audience or encompass diverse Arabic dialects beyond the Egyptian variety. Furthermore, as a qualitative-descriptive study focused on behavioral deconstruction, this research does not quantitatively measure the correlation between digital media consumption frequency and formal Arabic proficiency. Future studies are encouraged to involve more diverse speakers from various cultural backgrounds to obtain a more comprehensive mapping of Arabic language evolution within the global digital ecosystem.

In summary, the dialogue between empirical data and theoretical frameworks reveals that Arabic language errors on TikTok are manifestations of linguistic adaptation to an ecosystem that demands speed, identity expression, and multimodality. These language errors have been deconstructed from mere "academic failures" into a rapid, evolving process of linguistic change within digital spaces.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that Arabic language errors within synchronous discourse on TikTok are not random occurrences but rather systematic patterns encompassing morphological, syntactic, lexical-semantic, and phonetic deviations. These errors are driven by the interplay between native language interference (Indonesian), the influence of other foreign languages (Arabic), the demands for digital communication speed, and dialectal influences derived from popular culture. Nevertheless, these errors do not impede communicative success, as meaning is effectively negotiated through collaborative multimodal elements and situational context. Within the digital realm, these errors undergo a cycle of exposure, adoption, and normalization, reinforced by the high tolerance of the user community.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of digital linguistics by providing empirical evidence regarding the deconstruction of Arabic linguistic norms in digital spaces. This study successfully shifts the paradigm of "language errors" from a pathological phenomenon or a lack of competence toward a dynamic form of linguistic adaptation. These findings enrich social media sociolinguistics by demonstrating that digital spaces serve not merely as channels for language transmission, but as environments for identity production, where new linguistic variations—including non-standard forms—are actively reproduced by the community.

Given the limitations of this study, it is recommended that future research conduct comparative studies involving more diverse speakers from various cultural backgrounds and a wider range of dialects to map more representative patterns of linguistic variation. Furthermore, mixed-methods research is required to integrate qualitative analysis with quantitative metrics, validating the extent to which the frequency of digital content consumption correlates with shifts or declines in formal Arabic grammatical proficiency. Finally, research into the effectiveness of digital literacy-based Arabic language pedagogy is essential to address the challenges posed by the normalization of these errors in the future.

REFERENCES

Adelia, C., Purba, K., Simarmata, R., Nurrin, J. M., & Wulandari, A. N. (2026). Fenomena Alih Kode dan Campur Kode dalam Komunikasi Digital: Studi Kasus Interaksi Mahasiswa Dwibahasawan di WhatsApp. *Mesada: Journal of Innovative Research, 3*(1), 176–181. https://ziaresearch.or.id/index.php/mesada/article/view/385

Ameria, C., Manullang, D. B., Vanesa, L. G., Natalia, R., Yusuf, S. N., Gafari, O. F., & Puspitarini, H. (2026). Analisis Tindak Tutur Ilokusi Dominan dalam Komentar Masyarakat terhadap Video Kekerasan Aparat terhadap Pelajar di Media Sosial. *Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa, Sastra, dan Budaya, 2*(1), 89–95. https://sihojurnal.com/index.php/basadya/article/view/1372

Arsiwan, J. (2025). Pengaruh Interferensi Bahasa Daerah terhadap Struktur Kalimat Bahasa Indonesia. *Journal of Language Studies, 1*(1), 9–16. https://ejournal.kalibra.or.id/index.php/jols/article/view/28

Azhari, A., Aminah, S., & Octaviary, A. C. (2025). Ragam Bahasa di Media Sosial Mahasiswa Universitas Bumi Persada Lhokseumawe. *Kande: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, 6*(1), 114–126. https://doi.org/10.29103/jk.v6i1.21911

Delli Paoli, A., & D'Auria, V. (2025). The digitalization of ethnography: A scoping review of methods in netnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 54*(4), 559–587. https://doi.org/10.1177/08912416251342795

Hutabarat, E. N., Binneka, I., Lingga, Y. E. B., Sirait, G. A., & Prihasti, E. (2025). Strategi Efektif dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di Era Digital. *Jurnal Review Pendidikan dan Pengajaran, 8*(2), 4091–4094. https://doi.org/10.31004/jrpp.v8i2.44523

Ilham, M. A., Supriadi, R., & Al Farisi, M. Z. (2025). Transformasi Bahasa Indonesia dalam Konteks Digital: Perubahan pada Struktur dan Bentuk Bahasa. *Jurnal Bastra (Bahasa dan Sastra), 10*(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.36709/bastra.v10i1.607

Istiqomah, A., Safaah, T. N., & Haryati, G. (2025). Variasi Bahasa dalam Komentar TikTok: Kajian Sosiolinguistik Digital. *J-CEKI: Jurnal Cendekia Ilmiah, 4*(6), 979–985. https://doi.org/10.56799/jceki.v4i6.10418

Judijanto, L., Hakim, L., Utami, W. S., & Adiazmil, A. (2025). The impact of the BookTok phenomenon on the transformation of Generation Z's reading habits in the digital age in Indonesia. *The Eastasouth Journal of Social Science and Humanities, 2*(2), 152–160. https://doi.org/10.58812/esssh.v2i02.473

Karaman, A., & Vesek, S. (2025). A qualitative research on digital consumption behaviors of Syrians living in Türkiye. *Pazarlama ve Pazarlama Araştırmaları Dergisi, 18*(2), 383–424. https://doi.org/10.15659/ppad.18.2.1606205

Kazu, İ. Y., & Kuvvetli, M. (2023). A triangulation method on the effectiveness of digital game-based language learning for vocabulary acquisition. *Education and Information Technologies, 28*(10), 13541–13567. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-023-11756-y

Li, L., & Huang, J. (2025). Online discourse and chronotopic identity work: A longitudinal digital ethnography on WeChat. *New Media & Society, 27*(6), 3596–3617. https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448241228809

Marta, C. D., Kharisma, I., Aisyah, N., & Alwi, N. A. (2025). Analysis of TikTok as a social media platform and its effect on elementary school students' achievement. *International Journal of Elementary School, 2*(2), 75–81. https://doi.org/10.69637/ijes.v2i2.533

Masfufah, I., Asrini, H. W., & Saraswati, E. (2026). Language Games dalam Pemakaian Bahasa Indonesia di Media Sosial TikTok. *ESTETIK: Jurnal Bahasa Indonesia, 9*(1), 364–381. https://doi.org/10.29240/estetik.v9i1.15910

Neyarasmi, F., & Musyawir, M. (2025). Pergeseran Tindak Berbahasa Mahasiswa dalam Komunikasi Formal dan Informal di Tengah Perkembangan Digital. *DIKBASTRA: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra, 8*(1), 20–31. https://doi.org/10.22437/dikbastra.v8i1.43557

Novita, R. Y., & Rosidah, C. T. (2025). Analisis Penggunaan Bahasa Gaul dalam Media Sosial terhadap Pemahaman Bahasa Indonesia Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *ESTETIK: Jurnal Bahasa Indonesia, 8*(1), 69–85. https://doi.org/10.29240/estetik.v8i1.12717

Nurrahma, N., Gaffar, M. S., & Sumari, S. N. (2025). Fenomena Penurunan Bahasa Indonesia Baku di Kalangan Remaja: Faktor Sosial dan Media Sosial. *DEIKTIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra, 5*(4), 4567–4574. https://doi.org/10.53769/deiktis.v5i4.2208

Saragih, S. F., & Napitupulu, S. (2026). Language errors in TikTok content captions. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan dan Sosial, 4*(4), 979–987. https://doi.org/10.58540/jipsi.v4i4.1327

Sari, M., Kulsum, U., Al Bahar, A. H., Hula, I. R. N., & Pallawagau, B. (2025). Transformasi An-Naḥt dalam Identitas Linguistik Muslim Multibahasa: Studi Kasus Media Sosial. *Jurnal Onoma: Pendidikan, Bahasa, dan Sastra, 11*(4), 4508–4525. https://doi.org/10.30605/onoma.v11i4.7193

Setiyani, A., Judijanto, L., Nurmalita, N., Irianto, I., Aryani, L., Fatubun, R. R., ... Abdurahman, A. (2026). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. PT Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia.

Sirait, G. A., Lingga, Y. E. B., Hutasoit, T. M., Tarigan, B., & Sari, Y. (2026). Analisis Alih Kode dan Campur Kode dalam Komunikasi Mahasiswa di Media Sosial serta Perannya terhadap Pembentukan Identitas Bahasa Generasi Muda. *DEIKTIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra, 6*(1), 50–54. https://doi.org/10.53769/deiktis.v6i1.2941

Situmorang, S. (2025). Transformasi Bahasa dan Konteks Sosial dalam Praktik Komunikasi Digital Gen-Z di TikTok: Suatu Kajian Pragmatik. *DEIKTIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra, 5*(4), 5439–5445. https://doi.org/10.53769/deiktis.v5i4.2704

Supia, A., Putri, E. C. N., Sulistiyaningtias, I., Wardhana, R. A., & Saefudin, A. (2025). TikTok sebagai Media Ekspresi Sosial Budaya dan Kritik Sosial Mahasiswa UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. *Al-Hikmah Media Dakwah, Komunikasi, Sosial dan Kebudayaan, 16*(2), 98–107. https://doi.org/10.32505/hikmah.v16i2.12927

Uluum, D. C., Musli, M., & Mustar, M. (2025). Pendidikan Bahasa Arab untuk Generasi Z: Strategi Adaptasi Pengajaran di Era Digital. *JIIP: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan, 8*(4), 3768–3774. https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v8i4.7594

Ulya, R. H. (2024). Transformasi Makrolinguistik Bahasa Indonesia dalam Gamitan Media Digital: Analisis Wacana Kritis pada Platform Media Sosial. *Jurnal Ilmiah Langue and Parole, 8*(1), 91–99. https://doi.org/10.36057/jilp.v8i1.717

Wati, Z. K., Hermawan, A., Hadi, S., & Ansori, R. W. (2026). Dinamika Bahasa Kolokial dalam Diskursus Digital: Analisis Sosiolinguistik terhadap Konten Food Vlogging Ria SW. *Jurnal Pendidikan: Riset dan Konseptual, 10*(2), 392–407. https://doi.org/10.28926/riset_konseptual.v10i2.1492