

EXPLORING REGISTER VARIATION IN AKULAKU MARKETPLACE: SOCIOLINGUISTICS STUDY

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Abstract: This study investigates the sociolinguistic dynamics of register variation in the Akulaku language community, focusing on how language functions in a digital marketplace setting. The purpose of the research is twofold: (1) to identify the types of registers used in the Akulaku app, and (2) to describe the language functions these registers serve within the marketing community. Utilizing qualitative methods, the study applies descriptive analysis to written register terms found in Akulaku's product titles, descriptions, and advertisements. The analysis is guided by Halliday and Hasan's (1989) theory of register types and Jakobson's (1960) theory of language functions. The results indicate that closed registers are more prevalent compared to open registers. The functions of these registers include referential, emotive, conative, phatic, poetic, and metalingual. These findings suggest that register variation in Akulaku is strategically adapted to meet the communicative needs of the marketplace, with conative and emotive functions playing significant roles in engaging users. The study concludes that the effective use of registers in digital marketplaces like Akulaku can enhance communication by aligning linguistic choices with user needs and expectations. It recommends that marketplace developers and vendors focus on understanding and utilizing these registers to improve user experience and engagement. Future research could explore the impact of these linguistic strategies on consumer behavior and business outcomes in e-commerce environments.

Keywords: *sociolinguistics; register variation; digital marketplace; Akulaku; language functions; e-commerce communication; linguistic strategies; user engagement.*

INTRODUCTION

Register is one of the variations of language used by people who share a common interest in both hobbies and work in a community. Each community has different register terms according to their respective experiences. For example, the registers used in economics will be different from the registers used in biology. There are a lot of scientific terms that are used by scientists, while in economics, there's a lot of use for financial terms that deal with terms related to numbers. These days, many human beings gather online over the world because of technological development, so many varieties of registers are frequently used. One of the phenomena that happens and is experienced by people nowadays is that every part of society needs to be prepared to face digitalization to evolve to the present day with technological advances. This opinion is also supported by the phenomenon that occurred in the field of education after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Such as demanding all courses provided to involve technology and active learning in course design (Waluyo, 2020).

The development of technology does provide many conveniences for humans, especially in terms of interaction and communication using language. Everyone now involved by the technology "The technology is a compounding of the real world with the virtual world involving linguistics aspect beyond its interaction." (Simatupang & Heryono, 2022). One of the products created by technology is the existence of an online market that houses a variety of merchant communities with a wider target market called Marketplace. Marketplace is currently one of the platforms that has become the most famous icon among the public. This medium can show human interaction in terms of buying and selling by using certain language terms. This activity could give more insight and categorized as digital literacy. As language could change to a new meaning in

certain context (Baig et al., 2019). Activities on this platform certainly have their unique characteristics in the register that is often used. The advent of digital communication presents new terrains for exploration. Register use in e-commerce (or electronic commerce) is covered a buying and selling activity accessed through electronic media (Puspahaty & Rachmah, 2023). Akulaku holds the top apps that provide e-commerce services which eases consumer payments with its installment and money loan methods. There are a lot of Indonesians who use the Akulaku application to fulfill their needs (Malfiany & Apdian, 2021).

Previous research has demonstrated the unique nature of register terms in different communities. For example, “The Use of Register in Online Transportation Applications in North Sulawesi” (Natanael et al., 2021) focused on linguistic word formation and the form of register proposed by Joos (1968), with the object of the research being register in online transportation applications. Another study, “Register in the TED Lasso Series Season One Pilot Episode: A Sociolinguistics Analysis” (Mardiana, 2023), examines the types of registers and the components of ethnographic communication. Similarly, research on “Register of Online Transactions in the Field of Beauty on Social Media Instagram” (Dewi et al., 2021), “Health Register for the COVID-19 Pandemic on Social Media Instagram” (Alfazri et al., 2022), and “Registers Used in Online Food Shops of Instagram: A Sociolinguistic Analysis” (Maqsood et al., 2023) has shown significant differences in register use across various online communities.

Studies have delved into the variations and complexities of registers in digital contexts, such as the Corpus of Online Registers of English, which identifies registers from unrestricted open web sources (Laippala et al., 2023). This comprehensive approach to identifying registers in vast online environments underscores the dynamic nature of language in digital communication. Additionally, research by Newton and Hashimoto (2023) on public prayers highlights how specific registers are utilized to convey different functions in religious contexts, showcasing the diversity of register usage across various social settings.

Azzahra and Simatupang (2024) examined the register used in Indonesian food reviews on YouTube, illustrating how digital platforms influence language use and register variation. This study provides insights into how informal and formal registers intermingle in user-generated

content, reflecting the hybrid nature of online communication. Similarly, Nagamine (2024) explored the phonetic aspects of second language speech, focusing on Japanese speakers' production of English liquids, which sheds light on the phonological challenges and adaptations in language learning contexts.

Li's (2024) dissertation on sociolinguistic variation in speech perception emphasizes the need to understand how different registers impact listeners' perceptions and interpretations of speech. This perspective is crucial for comprehending how language users navigate various registers in dynamic communication environments. Ünsal Şakiroğlu (2024) further contributes to this understanding by analyzing lexical change in Turkish over a century, demonstrating the long-term evolution of registers and their socio-cultural implications.

Bohmann (2020) and Schmid (2020) have explored the global variations and dynamics of English registers, emphasizing the interconnectedness of linguistic systems and their usage patterns. Their research highlights how global communication influences register variation, providing a broader context for understanding register dynamics in digital marketplaces like Akulaku. Sóskuthy (2021) evaluated modeling strategies for dynamic speech analysis, offering methodological insights that are applicable to studying registers in online interactions.

The studies by Keevallik and Ogden (2020) and Papi and Hiver (2020) focused on the nuances of language use in social interactions and language learning motivation, respectively. Their findings underscore the importance of considering both social and psychological factors in register analysis. Additionally, research by Bollen et al. (2021) on historical language records reveals cognitive distortions in recent decades, highlighting the impact of societal changes on language use.

Studies on multilingualism and linguistic innovation, such as those by Wei (2020) and Castellucci et al. (2022), demonstrate how diverse language backgrounds and technological advancements drive register variation. These insights are pertinent for understanding the multilingual nature of Akulaku's user base and the linguistic strategies employed in its marketplace interactions. Rowe and Weisleder (2020) further contextualize language development within social environments, emphasizing the role of context in shaping language use.

Research on language change in 'new-normal' classrooms by Qodriani and Wijana (2020) and the analysis of registers on social media by Clarke (2022) provide contemporary perspectives on how digital and social changes influence language use. These studies highlight the adaptive nature of language and its ability to reflect societal shifts.

The investigation into registers used in the Female Daily Network by Odhilia et al. (2023) and the pragmatic analysis of language in e-commerce live streaming by Daga-as and Baradillo (2024) offer specific insights into how registers function in niche online communities. Xu et al. (2024) and Mubarak et al. (2024) further explore communication styles in e-commerce live streaming, emphasizing the role of host communication in shaping user engagement and register variation.

Finally, studies by Huang et al. (2024) and Yao et al. (2024) on the influence of communication language on purchase intention and customer responses to virtual streamers' language provide practical implications for understanding the impact of register variation on consumer behavior in digital marketplaces.

Despite the extensive research on registers in various contexts, there remains a gap in understanding the deeper sociolinguistic processes at play within newer, less-studied online marketplaces such as Akulaku. This gap is particularly evident in the analysis of register in online interactions. For example, while studies like those of Natanael et al. (2021) and Maqsood et al. (2023) provide insights into register use in specific online platforms, they do not fully explore the intersection of register types and language functions in a comprehensive manner. Furthermore, there is a lack of research focusing on how the unique socio-cultural context of Southeast Asia influences register variation and language functions in e-commerce settings.

This study aims to fill this gap by providing a deeper examination of register use in the Akulaku online marketplace. By employing a robust mixed-method approach, this research not only investigates the linguistic characteristics of different register types but also explores the language functions they serve within the digital economy. In addressing these gaps, the study presents novel insights into the dynamic interplay between language, identity, and commerce in the digital age. Specifically, it examines how registers in Akulaku reflect and shape user interactions, trust, and engagement.

The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive approach to analyzing register variation and language functions in an understudied online marketplace. By integrating Halliday and Hasan's (1989) theory of register types with Jakobson's (1960) framework of language functions, this study offers a holistic perspective on how language operates within the Akulaku community. Additionally, the focus on a Southeast Asian e-commerce platform provides unique insights into how cultural and regional factors influence language use in digital interactions. The findings from this study will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the sociolinguistic dynamics in digital marketplaces, offering valuable implications for e-commerce communication strategies and user engagement.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative methods because the research is studied in more depth, as stated by Moleong (2017) in Royadi et al. (2019). Qualitative methods try to understand the phenomenon that occurred to the research object. This study uses qualitative methods by conducting a thorough and detailed approach and observation related to the topic phenomenon in question (A & Abdillah, 2019, p. 12). The methods used in presenting research results are descriptive methods. This study used mixed method qualitative and descriptive data to explain the form of written words (Sari & Anindita, 2020) to analyze the types and language functions. The author uses this method because the analyzed data are words and sentences that require detailed explanation. A general description of the results of the data analysis can be obtained in more detail. Overall, this study will describe the current state of the research object according to the facts of the data obtained.

In this study, researchers used register used in Akulaku Marketplace Apps as the research object. The data was retrieved from Akulaku menus, advertisements, product descriptions, and product titles. This study employs a methodological framework designed to capture the breadth and depth of register variation within the Akulaku online marketplace.

This research was conducted in two stages: the preliminary research stage and the research stage. The preliminary research includes (1) determining the topic of the research, (2) conducting a literature review, (3) determining the grand theory, (4) formulating research problems or research questions (RQs), and (5) selecting

research methods. Afterward, the researcher's research stage involves (1) collecting the data with the following steps: (a) Open Akulaku Marketplace Apps. (b) Retrieve data from the Akulaku menu, advertisements, product titles, and product descriptions. (c) Capture the data through screenshots.

Then (2) identifying registers in sentences that contain criteria through its contextual, frequency of use, functionality, representativeness and variability, (3) recording data for each register found, (4) data verification to ensuring data reliability and validity through data triangulation, (5) classifying the data based on types and functions, (6) analyzing the data based on research questions and theories, and (7) concluding the research results based on the theory.

The researcher here acts as a non-participant observer because the researcher is not directly involved in the event but only as an independent observer.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In analyzing the sociolinguistic dynamics of register variation in the Akulaku language community, it is essential to categorize the identified registers into two primary types: closed registers and open registers. Closed registers refer to language use that is more formal, restricted, and specific to particular contexts or groups. These registers are characterized by their fixed meanings and limited flexibility, often found in professional or technical settings. Examples include terminologies used in academic writing, legal documents, or technical manuals.

On the other hand, open registers are more flexible and informal, frequently used in casual or everyday interactions. These registers have broader meanings and are adaptable to various contexts. They are commonly found in conversational language, social media interactions, and informal communications.

The table below categorizes various register terms found in the Akulaku Marketplace app into closed and open registers. Each term is analyzed based on its usage context and linguistic characteristics to determine whether it fits into the closed or open register category.

Table 1. *Various register terms found in the Akulaku Marketplace app into closed and open registers*

Register	Closed	Open
Features	✓	
Paylater	✓	

Buy now, save	✓	
Bundle Package	✓	
World of Luxury	✓	
BNOB	✓	
Tenor		✓
Wow! Stunning		✓
Payday Sale		✓
Hello boss!		✓
Feast your eyes		✓
Refurbish		✓

This categorization helps in understanding the specific linguistic strategies used in the Akulaku Marketplace to communicate effectively with its users. By distinguishing between closed and open registers, we can better appreciate how language functions are tailored to suit different communication needs within the platform.

Closed register

Data #1

“This smartphone features a 6.5-inch OLED display, a triple-camera system, and 128GB of storage capacity.” (Source: Akulaku Apps)

The word “features” is found in products descriptions. This indicated as a closed register since the word “this” emphasize about the features only for this types of smartphone not the whole types of smartphone. This terms used to inform the buyer about the features of the phone about display, camera system and storage capacity. The seller give explanation straight forward to its factual information of the products.

Furthermore, the word “features” serves the referential function by providing factual information about the product. It describes the features and specifications of the smartphone, such as the screen size, camera system, and storage capacity, aiming to inform potential buyers about its attributes. The register “features” indicating its informative nature and alignment with the referential function of conveying factual information about the smartphone product.

Data #2

“*Segera miliki produk impian dengan Paylater*” (Source: Akulaku Apps)

The register “paylater” analyzed as closed register since it has a limited meaning about payment method that usually used by customers. This terms frequently found in Akulaku menus, product description and advertisement. This terms is abbreviation of the word “pay” and

“later” which indicates payment methods that closely about credit. This terms use to suggest customer to buy certain product without worrying about money because this methods give chance for customer to buy the product now and pay in certain period of time.

The register function above has an emotive function to emphasize about payment methods in Akulaku apps. The terms “paylater” gives emotion to the customers for bought certain product with this methods. The line “segera miliki produk impian” here provide more persuasive statement to engage the customer with this payment methods. This imaginative function can give the customers a solution for those people that didn’t have money at the time they want bought something.

Data #3

“Buy now to claim your exclusive discount code and save 20% on your first purchase!”(Source:Akulaku Apps)

The word “Buy now” and “save 20%” in this phrase categorized as closed register since it is limited to certain product that only get exclusive discount at certain store. The word click here limited to one link product that campaign the promotion sale. This sale limited to someone that first time purchase on that seller. So if you bought second purchase then you cannot redeem this promotion campaign.

The statement “Buy now” and “save 20%” belongs to conative function. The imperative statement “Buy now” and persuasive incentive “save 20%” aim to influence the reader's behavior and prompt them to take action, providing clear evidence of the conative function's intention to persuade and motivate. This example serves the conative function by aiming to influence or persuade the reader to take a specific action – in this case, to click on the provided link and use the discount code to make a purchase. It uses imperative language and an incentive (discount) to motivate the reader to engage with the offer.

Data #4

“Guess what’s new! Bundle package for you.”
(Source: Akulaku Apps)

This greeting found in storefront menu in Akulaku apps. This greeting analyzed as an closed register since it has unlimited meaning only great

and guessing its stores product to be launch soon. This usually used to reach out customer to get curiosity to prospected customers.

The polite greeting “Guess what’s new” and “Bundle Package” establish a friendly and welcoming tone. It also invites curiosity and directs buyers towards the latest products or updates. This words categorized as a phatic function that establishing and maintaining social relationships between the seller and potential buyers. It involves customers to curiosity and aiming to create a positive impression and foster trust.

Data #5

“Step into a world of luxury with our handcrafted leather bags, where style meets sophistication.” (Source: Akulaku Apps)

This word found in product description in Akulaku apps. This words are part of closed register since the seller emphasize they are sell a handcrafted leather bags. So this register has a limited meaning only luxury leather bags. Another sophistication here limited to seller’s product only.

This example serves the poetic function by using language for its aesthetic or artistic qualities. The descriptive and evocative language “world of luxury,” “style meets sophistication” creates a vivid and appealing image of the product, emphasizing its aesthetic qualities and aiming to evoke sensory or emotional responses, demonstrating its alignment with the poetic function. It employs creative and evocative language to paint a vivid picture of the product, emphasizing its luxurious qualities and aiming to evoke sensory or emotional responses from potential buyers.

Data #6

“Paling Murah Tab 7 in Baru BNOB.” (Source: Akulaku Apps)

This terms is a closed register because it cannot separated each other because has a whole meaning. BNOB is an acronym of Brand New Open Box and used as a description that the product is a new product but the box has been opened with the aim of checking goods. This terms used by seller to give information so that the buyer could not misunderstanding to buy this product. That phrases used to indicate the status and quality

of goods marketed in the Akulaku apps and it is show a closed register because this terms has a certain meaning.

The register words above have a metalingual function that is the purpose in accordance with the language used without any implied purpose. This terms involves using language to discuss language itself. to emphasize about the state of the goods marketed on the Akulaku apps. Akulaku Seller also attached the picture of the product that explain that terms. The picture was a tablet with unsealed box. In that term implied the condition of the particular item being offered. This imaginative function can give the customers a whole description about the product that this is the brand new that has been opened for a checking items process. This term use to make sure the customer so that cannot lead to a misunderstanding. As stated before that this Tab is BNOB product that could gave vivid imagery to express the product spesifically.

Open register

Data #7

“12 month Tenor” (Source: Akulaku Apps)

This terms “Tenor” found at Akulaku menus analyzed as open register since this terms has unlimited meaning in another field of communication. Tenor in this study is differ with tenor terms in music. This is used to increase purchasing power so that customers can consider the payment period for purchasing products with the installment method.

The function of the terms above is a referential function where the term refers to a certain context in the Akulaku apps. This terms used to explain the period of time before something becomes due for payment. The terms itself refers to provides factual information about the product that could bought with credit for certain period of time.

Data #8

“Wow! This dress is absolutely stunning! I love the vibrant colors and elegant design.” (Source: Akulaku Apps)

This terms found in product fashion review. This terms analyzed as open register since it has unlimited meaning and usually used by people every single day.

The enthusiastic language (“Wow! Stunning!”) and positive sentiment (“love the vibrant colors”) categorized as emotive function. These terms convey the speaker's emotional response and personal appreciation for the dress, demonstrating its alignment with the expressive function of expressing feelings and attitudes. This example expresses the speaker's personal emotions and opinions about the product. It conveys admiration and excitement for the dress, highlighting its attractive qualities and expressing the speaker's subjective experience and feelings.

Data#9

“Payday sale campaign!” (Source: Akulaku Apps)

The word “Payday sale” in this phrase categorized as open register because it is unlimited that use to get product every 25th of the month. This word found at home menu in Akulaku apps and when this campaign clicked, a lot of stuff could bought with discounted price.

The statement “Payday sale” belongs to conative function. The promotion statement “Payday Sale” aim to influence the reader's behavior and prompt them to take call-to-action to bought a product and this terms motivate the reader to engage with the payday sale offer.

Data #10

“Hello boss! Thank you for considering our products. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to our friendly customer support team!” (Source: Akulaku Apps)

This greeting found in autoreply-message by a seller. This greeting analyzed as an open register since it has unlimited meaning in another conversation. This usually used to reach out customer and usually use in daily communication among people.

The polite greeting “Hello! Thank you” and invitation for further communication “feel free to reach out” establish a friendly and welcoming tone, emphasizing the social aspect of the message and demonstrating its alignment with the phatic function of maintaining social relationships. This example serves the phatic function by establishing and maintaining social relationships and interactions between the seller and potential buyers. It begins with a polite greeting and gratitude, followed by an invitation for further

communication, aiming to create a positive impression and foster trust.

Data #11

“Feast your eyes on these beautiful lenses.”
(Source: Akulaku Apps)

This word found in product picture description in Akulaku apps. This words are part of open register since the seller used a figurative language to grab buyers attention. It is unlimited word that usually use in poetry.

This example serves the poetic function by creates a vivid and appealing image of the product, emphasizing its aesthetic qualities and aiming to evoke sensory or emotional responses from potential buyers.

Data #12

“...barang rekondisi (refurbish) copotan dari unit ac..”. (Source: Akulaku Apps)

“Rekondisi or Refurbish” this kind of words is an open register since this terms tends to be more standardized and less variable, as the developer adhere to established that this product is handmade. The register above has a straightforward function because the condition of the AC fan is a refurbishment of local assemblies. In fact, there are no factory produces AC fans so the register already represents the role of the original word.

The terms above do not use implied intent or anything, but directly explain the meaning of the term as usually used in buying and selling activities in the marketplace application. So The register words above have a metalingual function. This terms involves using language to discuss language itself and it concern about confirmation language that the condition of the product is “rekondisi” or the result of reconstructing the ac parts modified to become an ac fan. This can be an explanation and give an idea to the buyer about the condition of the item he is buying.

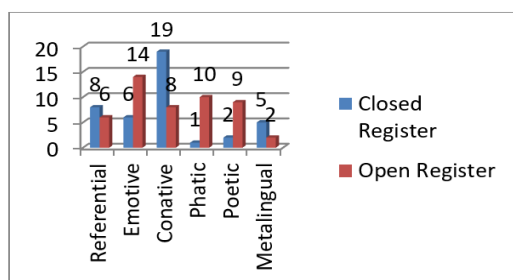


Figure 1. *Register types and language functions*

CONCLUSION

This study on the sociolinguistic dynamics of register variation in the Akulaku language community reveals significant insights into the nature and function of language in digital marketplaces. The research aimed to identify the types of registers and describe the language functions used by the marketing community within the Akulaku app. Utilizing qualitative methods and a descriptive approach, the study systematically analyzed written register terms in Akulaku, leveraging Halliday and Hasan's (1989) theory of register types and Jakobson's (1960) theory of language functions.

The findings indicate that the registers in Akulaku can be broadly categorized into closed and open types. Closed registers, which constituted the majority of the data, are characterized by their specificity and limited scope, often used in formal and professional contexts. In contrast, open registers exhibit greater flexibility and informality, commonly employed in casual interactions. The study identified that the most frequent language functions in the Akulaku registers were conative, emotive, and referential, which align with the platform's goals of persuading, engaging, and informing users, respectively.

The predominance of closed registers suggests that specialized terminology plays a crucial role in establishing clear communication and trust within the marketplace. This is particularly important in the context of e-commerce, where precise and unambiguous language can significantly impact customer satisfaction and trust. The conative function's prevalence highlights the platform's emphasis on influencing customer behavior, while the emotive function underscores the importance of engaging users on an emotional level to enhance their experience and loyalty.

This research contributes novel insights into the interplay between language, identity, and commerce in digital marketplaces. By examining the specific linguistic characteristics and functions of registers in Akulaku, the study enhances our understanding of how language is strategically used to meet the communicative needs of both vendors and customers. The findings have practical implications for optimizing digital communication strategies, suggesting that tailored language use can improve user experience and engagement in online marketplaces.

Future research could further explore the causality between register use and business outcomes in digital marketplaces, potentially offering deeper insights into the effectiveness of different linguistic strategies. Additionally, investigating the impact of cultural and regional factors on register variation could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the sociolinguistic dynamics in diverse digital environments. Overall, this study underscores the importance of sociolinguistic analysis in enhancing the functionality and user engagement of e-commerce platforms.

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