

TRANSLATION READABILITY OF THE VERB PHRASE WITH MODALITY IN THE TIKTOK PRIVACY POLICY

¹Zahwa Fatikha, ^{2*}Ina Sukaesih, and ³Septina Indrayani

^{1,2,3}Politeknik Negeri Jakarta, Depok, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: ina.sukaesih@bisnis.pnj.ac.id


ABSTRACT

This qualitative descriptive research aims to discuss the types of verb phrases with modality based on Palmer (1990) and Alwi (1992) theory, translation techniques based on theory introduced by Molina and Albir (2002), and translation readability based on theory developed by Nababan (2012) in the TikTok Privacy Policy. The source of data in this study is verb phrases with modality obtained from the webpage on the TikTok website containing the Privacy Policy of the TikTok platform in English and Indonesian versions. The translation readability was discussed through the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The data were analyzed using the data analysis method by Spradley, consisting of domain, taxonomic, componential, and cultural theme analysis. The linguistic data is the verb phrase with epistemic, dynamic, and deontic modality in the Privacy Policy on the TikTok website. In this research, 100 data of verb phrases with modality were obtained and categorized into three types of modalities; 50 data belong to the deontic modality, 24 data to the dynamic modality, and 18 data to the epistemic modality. Verb phrases with two modalities are also found; 6 data belong to the epistemic and deontic modalities, and 2 data belong to the epistemic and dynamic modalities. Eight translation techniques are adopted, including established equivalent, literal translation, linguistic amplification, transposition, the combination of established equivalent and transposition, the combination of literal translation and transposition, the combination of established equivalent and reduction, and the combination of linguistic amplification and established equivalent. The most used technique is the established equivalent with 62 data or 62% of the total data. The overall readability translation score of verb phrases with modality in the privacy policy has quite high readability, with a score of 2.76.

KEYWORDS: *Modality, Verb Phrases, Translation Techniques, Translation Quality, Privacy Policy.*

INTRODUCTION

As time passes, the internet has allowed digital platforms to become more advanced and accessible. Through social media and online forums, people have many opportunities to learn, keep up with current trends, and obtain information (Martunis,



2020). TikTok is one of the most used social media by internet users these days. It allows users to create and upload short videos featuring music clips and filters.

When signing up for an account, users are asked to fill in some personal data as the requirement for creating a TikTok account. Users must be aware that personal data is essential. According to its Privacy Policy, TikTok collects personal data, including email address and/or telephone number, date of birth, password, username, and any information for the user profile. They also collect devices, IP addresses, and any technical information. They may also ask for identity or age as proof to use certain features. Therefore, before signing up for a TikTok account, users should read and understand the Privacy Policy set by TikTok to know how the platform uses their personal data.

It remains important for people to read the privacy policies of social media platforms, even though many individuals nowadays tend to sign up without considering their personal data due to the fear of missing out on the latest trends. By reading privacy policies, individuals gain crucial insights into what information they are comfortable sharing and how the platform or third parties may use it. Awareness of these details empowers individuals to manage their privacy and security actively. Signing up for an account without being aware of personal data protection can lead to various potential harms, including data breaches, scams, and phishing attacks.

Any inaccurate information may cause users to misunderstand how their personal data are managed. Policy information should be appropriately explained using clear sentences, phrases, or words. In the TikTok Privacy Policy, verb phrases are the most dominant, including the verb phrase with modality. Many sentences with verb phrases with modality in the TikTok Privacy Policy explain how the platform uses and manages users' personal data.

TikTok provides information about the Privacy Policy on its official website in English, translated into various languages, one of which is Indonesian. A good-quality translation is essential in rendering information from any source language to the target language (Trisnawati & Bahri, 2017), and in the case of the Privacy Policy, it is particularly significant to convey readable messages and the meaning of the policy to users. This research focuses on the translation readability of the verb phrase with modality to determine whether the policy's meaning is readable. In order to assess the translation readability, translation techniques used in translating the policy are also identified. Research on the translation quality of verb phrases with modality has been conducted on different objects. However, none has held research on the translation readability of the verb phrase with modality in the TikTok privacy policy.

The data in this research were obtained from the Privacy Policy on the TikTok website in English and Indonesian versions, which can be found by changing the website's language setting. This research used the theory of modality by Palmer (1990) and Alwi (1992), which consists of epistemic, dynamic, and deontic modalities. The translation techniques of verb phrases with modality were identified using the theory of translation techniques by Molina & Albir (2002), consisting of 18 techniques. After the translation technique identification, the translation readability of verb phrases with modality was assessed using the instrument developed by Nababan et al. (2012). This research aims to identify the verb phrases with modality in the TikTok Privacy Policy, identify translation techniques used in translating the verb phrase with modality, and describe the verb phrase's translation readability with modality in the TikTok Privacy Policy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

VERB PHRASES

Verbs can be widened by adding specific units in which the results remain the same in the syntactical order, i.e., verb phrases (Moeliono et al., 2017). Moeliono et al. (2017) also defined verb phrases as a language unit formed from two or more words with a verb as the main unit, but it is not a clause. Chaer (1994) in Engliana & Miranti (2020) defined a phrase as a combination of two or more words that form one unit and become one of the elements or functions of a sentence, including subject, predicate, object, or complement. In other words, verb phrases combine two or more words with a verb as the main unit, which forms one unit.

MODALITY

Modality is a complement in a sentence that relates to attitudes, actions, conditions, or events regarding the matter being discussed. According to Perkins (1983) and Ackrill (1963) as cited in Nugraha & Reyta (2019), modality was first proposed by Aristoteles by using a point of view based on modal logic, precisely necessity, possibility, and impossibility as modality problems. Modality is an expression often used in English, such as can, could, have to, had to, must, may, might, will, etc. According to Palmer (1990) and Alwi (1992), there are three types of modalities, which are epistemic (Ep), dynamic (D), and deontic (Deo). Each type refers to different focuses; epistemic modality refers to possibilities; dynamic modality refers to abilities and willingness; deontic refers to obligations, permissions, commands, and prohibitions.

TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES

Molina and Albir (2002) define translation technique as a "Procedure to analyze and classify how translation equivalence works." Translation techniques can also be defined

as transferring text meaning from the source language (SL) into the target language (TL) for micro units such as words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. Molina & Albir (2002) classified translation techniques into 18 techniques, which are: (1) Adaptation, (2) Amplification, (3) Borrowing, (4) Calque, (5) Compensation, (6) Description, (7) Discursive Creation, (8) Established Equivalent, (9) Generalization, (10) Linguistic Amplification, (11) Linguistic Compression, (12) Literal Translation, (13) Modulation, (14) Particularization, (15) Reduction, (16) Substitution, (17) Transposition, and (18) Variation.

TRANSLATION READABILITY

According to Nababan et al. (2012), the readability of a translation may be considered high if the reader easily understands a translated text. The words, phrases, and terms the translator used affect the readability aspect because they are things the readers have to read to understand the text. The instrument of translation readability assessment can be seen in the table below.

In this research, the readability aspect is the main focus because assessing the readability of TikTok's privacy policy is vital for clarity, informed consent, user trust, accessibility, and legal compliance since TikTok is a digital platform used by the public.

TABLE 1. *Instrument of Translation Readability Assessment*

SCORE	QUALITATIVE PARAMETER	TRANSLATION CATEGORY
3	Translated words, technical terms, phrases, clauses, and sentences can be understood easily by the reader	High readability level
2	In general, the translation can be understood by the reader, but there are still certain parts that should be read more than once to understand the translation	Intermediate readability level
1	Translation is hard to understand by the reader	Low readability level

PRIVACY POLICY

Friedrich (1975) in Alamsyah (2016) defined policy as a course of action proposed by a person, group, or government within a particular environment providing obstacles and opportunities in which the policy was proposed to use and overcome in order to achieve a goal or a specific purpose or objective. Syafrizal et al. (2021) define privacy as the ability of a person or group of people to control their interaction with other people through visual, audio, or olfactory to get what they want. Privacy helps people set boundaries to limit who has access to themselves, places, and things, also communication and information.

A privacy policy contains various policies relating to the website or platform, mainly on user data and information and visitor data management. A privacy policy is a legal statement regulated under applicable personal data use laws (LinovHR, 2022). If a platform has a transparent privacy policy, the providers, the users, and the third-party services will know clearly that the website activities are not detrimental. In addition, the privacy policy will gain the website's credibility by showing that the website prioritizes users' security (Libera, 2021).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a qualitative descriptive method. Research using a qualitative descriptive method usually analyzes, interpretes, or describes the obtained data in order to draw conclusions based on the data analyzed. According to Spradley (1975) in Santosa (2021), a researcher uses a qualitative approach to observe data to be categorized into categories, to display the type in the form of matrixes or tables to discover the relation patterns between categories, and to interpret complex patterns, theories, supporting data, and contexts simultaneously to search for the cultural theme.

The research sample was the Privacy Policy on the TikTok website, and the objects of the research were translation quality and technique of the verb phrase with epistemic, dynamic, and deontic modality translation. By using the qualitative descriptive method, the researchers described the translation quality based on the theory of Nababan et al. (2012) and identified the translation techniques based on Molina and Albir (2002).

The primary data in this research were divided into linguistic and translation data. Linguistic data focused on the verb phrase with epistemic, dynamic, and deontic modality in the Privacy Policy on the TikTok website. Translation data in this research were the Privacy Policy on the TikTok website in English and Indonesian versions, the translation readability, and the translation technique. The secondary data in this research consisted of journals, previous relevant studies, and books related to translation, verb phrases with modality, translation technique, and translation readability assessment.

This research used the document analysis technique (content analysis) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to collect data. The content analysis technique was used to obtain data in the form of verb phrases with modality in the Privacy Policy on the TikTok website. The data were collected by reading the TikTok Privacy Policy page. Then, verb phrases with modality in the text were listed and classified into three types: epistemic, dynamic, and deontic. FGD focused on discussing the translation readability assessment of verb phrases with modality in the Privacy Policy on the TikTok website.

The researchers provided data in the form of a table consisting of verb phrases with modality which have been classified into each type in English and Indonesian versions, in which the raters assessed the translation quality.

The purposive sampling technique was used to obtain the sample. This technique establishes the criteria to obtain samples that follow the study objectives (Santosa, 2021). In the TikTok Privacy Policy, there are also verb phrases without modality. In this study, the researchers only obtained samples in the form of verb phrases with modality in English (SL) and Indonesian (TL) in the Privacy Policy on the TikTok website in which the researchers subsequently identified the translation technique, and the raters assessed the translation readability.

Triangulation technique was used to validate the data source and data collection in this research. The triangulation of data source was conducted by comparing the primary data, that is, verb phrases with modality found in the Privacy Policy document in English version (SL) and Indonesian version (TL) on the TikTok website, also analyzing and assessing the translation readability of the verb phrase with modality through the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Triangulation of the data collection method in this study was conducted by using content analysis and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Content analysis was used to obtain data in the form of verb phrases with modality found in the Privacy Policy on the TikTok website. In the Focus Group Discussion, the raters assessed and discussed the translation readability of verb phrases with epistemic, dynamic, and deontic modalities.

The research stages started with collecting verb phrases with modality in the Privacy Policy on the TikTok website. Then, the verb phrase with modality was classified into verb phrases with dynamic, epistemic, and deontic modalities in the domain analysis. After the classification, the researchers identified the translation technique based on Molina and Albir's theory. After the translation technique identification, the researchers involved the raters to assess the translation readability based on Nababan's theory. The translation technique identification and translation readability assessment were done in the taxonomic analysis. The final score from the assessment was determined in the componential analysis. Lastly, the researchers concluded the research with a cultural theme analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

VERB PHRASES WITH MODALITY

After being collected, 100 data of verb phrases with modality were found. These data were subsequently categorized into three types of modalities based on Palmer (1990)

and Alwi (1992) theories, which are epistemic, dynamic, and deontic modality. The results of verb phrases with modality found in the TikTok Privacy Policy are presented in the following table.

TABLE 2. *Types of verb phrases with modality*

TYPES	DEO	D	EP	EP + DEO	EP + D
Frequency	50	24	18	6	2

Deontic modality dominates the privacy policy because it clearly expresses obligations, permissions, and prohibitions given by TikTok to its users. The modals in deontic modality help outline what the platform must do, what users are allowed or not allowed to do, and what actions are prohibited since privacy policy needs to comply with laws and regulations. The example of verb phrases with deontic modality is as follows.

ST: You must obtain approval from your parent(s) or legal guardian(s);

TT: *Anda harus mendapatkan persetujuan dari orang tua atau wali yang sah;*

In this sentence, the verb phrase 'must obtain' translated into 'harus mendapatkan' expresses the obligation imposed by the privacy policy, indicating what individuals are obligated to do in order to comply with the specified condition of obtaining approval from one's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Privacy policies are typically written formally and objectively to ensure clarity and avoid ambiguity. It aims to provide transparent information rather than speculating on possibilities. Therefore, epistemic modality is the least used in privacy policy because it expresses possibility, which can introduce uncertainty and speculation.

There are also verb phrases that belong to two modalities in the privacy policy, but they are relatively less common. Verb phrases with two modalities usually help convey more complex meanings. However, to prevent complexity and ambiguity, verb phrases that belong to two modalities are not frequently used in the privacy policy. Privacy policy aims to maintain a straightforward and easily comprehensible language style.

TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES

Translation techniques used in translating the verb phrase with modality can be seen in the table below. The translation techniques are identified using Molina and Albir's (2002) theory. Some abbreviations are used: TT stands for translation technique; Fr for frequency of translation techniques used; EE for Established Equivalent; T for Transposition; LT for Literal Translation; R for Reduction; LA for Linguistic Amplification.

TABLE 3. *Number of translation techniques*

TECHNIQUE	FREQUENCY
EE	62
EE + T	17
LT	15
T	2
LT + T	1
EE + R	1
LA	1
EE + LA	1

The Established Equivalent technique dominates privacy policy translation because it provides an equivalent and precise representation of the original policy. Hence, users are able to comprehend their rights and the platform's obligations effectively. This technique focuses on finding equivalent expressions and terms in the target language that convey the same obligations, permissions, and prohibitions as the source language. The following is an example of the use of the Established Equivalent technique.

ST: Your purchase will be made via your Apple iTunes or Google Play account.
 TT: *Pembelian Anda akan dilakukan melalui akun iTunes Apple atau Google Play Anda.*

The phrase 'will be made' is translated into 'akan dilakukan', an equivalent verb phrase in the target language that conveys the same meaning as the verb phrase in the source language.

A combination of two translation techniques is also used. The second most used translation technique is the combination of Established Equivalent and Transposition techniques. The Established Equivalent technique ensures accurate translations by finding commonly used terms for privacy-related concepts. Meanwhile, the Transposition technique focuses on improving grammar, sentence structure, and word order, making the translated policy more readable. This combination helps maintain consistency throughout the translated document. The following is an example of the use of the Established Equivalent + Transposition technique.

ST: We will also disclose your information to third parties:
 TT: *Kami juga akan mengungkapkan informasi Anda kepada pihak ketiga:*

The phrase 'will also disclose' is translated into 'juga akan mengungkapkan', an equivalent verb phrase in the TL that conveys the same meaning as the verb phrase in the SL. It also uses the Transposition technique because the word order of the English phrase 'will also disclose' is transposed to 'juga akan mengungkapkan' in Indonesian, which typically places the adverb 'juga' (meaning 'also') before the verb phrase 'akan mengungkapkan' (meaning 'will disclose').

The combination of Established Equivalent and Linguistic Amplification techniques is the least used in translating the privacy policy because the Established Equivalent technique aims to find established translations or commonly used terms for privacy-related concepts. However, Linguistic Amplification involves adding extra information, which may introduce ambiguity or deviate from the intended meaning and make them even more difficult to understand. The following is an example of the use of the Established Equivalent + Linguistic Amplification technique.

ST: "You may appeal any decision we have made about your request..."

TT: "Anda dapat mengajukan banding atas keputusan yang telah kami buat tentang permintaan Anda..."

The phrase 'may appeal' used the Established Equivalent technique since it is translated into 'dapat mengajukan banding atas keputusan', an equivalent verb phrase in the TL that conveys the same meaning as the verb phrase in the SL. It also uses the Linguistic Amplification technique because the phrase 'may appeal any decision' is translated into 'dapat mengajukan banding atas keputusan', which has additional information 'mengajukan banding', referring specifically to the legal concept of the verb 'appeal' in Indonesian.

TRANSLATION READABILITY ASSESSMENT

The readability aspect is related to reading activities. In translation, this aspect assesses the readability level of ST and TT. The instrument of translation readability assessment is based on Nababan et al. (2012) theory. The assessment of the translation readability aspect of the verb phrase with modality in The TikTok Privacy Policy can be seen in the table below.

TABLE 4. Translation Readability Assessment

CATEGORY	SCORE (S)	NUMBER OF	
		DATA (N)	N x S
High	3	78	234
Intermediate	2	20	40
Low	1	2	2
Total		100	276
Average Score			2.76

The translation readability score of verb phrases with modality in the TikTok Privacy Policy signifies a quite high readability level with an average score of 2.76. However, some verb phrases with modality translation still belong to the intermediate and low readability levels. The result shows that readers can easily understand the translation, but in some parts, they might need to read it repeatedly to comprehend the meaning and context.

The verb phrase with modality translation that belongs to the high readability level has an average score of 3 given by raters. It means that the phrases are simple enough for readers to fully understand the meaning without reading repetition.

The verb phrase with modality translation that belongs to the intermediate readability level has an average score of 2 given by raters. In raters' opinion, the translation in which most verb phrases are easy to understand, but some parts need more reading so readers can fully understand the meaning.

The verb phrase with modality translation that belongs to the low readability level has an average score of 1 given by raters. Translations with low readability levels are assessed based on translated texts that are difficult for readers to comprehend. In raters' opinion, the verb phrases with modality used in the sentence are rarely used and uncommon, so it is hard for them to understand the source text and the target text.

INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MODALITY TYPES, TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES, AND TRANSLATION READABILITY

The most used modality type, the deontic modality, is translated using the Established Equivalent technique. This technique focuses on using phrases or words commonly used in the target language, resulting in a quite high level of readability. This shows that the use of this technique affects the translation readability of the verb phrase with deontic modality in the TikTok Privacy Policy.

In contrast, the Epistemic modality appears the least in the Privacy Policy. This modality expresses possibility, which may introduce uncertainty into the policy. Considering the context criteria of a privacy policy, which is avoiding uncertainty, it is understandable that there is limited use of the Epistemic modality. However, when it is necessary to translate this modality, the Established Equivalent technique is again the preferred technique. This technique ensures that the translated content remains readable by using familiar phrases or words in the target language.

Furthermore, it is observed that verb phrases containing two modalities are least commonly found in the Privacy Policy. This finding suggests that the policy tends to avoid using multiple modalities within a single phrase. Such combinations can lead to confusion, ambiguity, and complexity for readers. As a result, the verb phrase with two modals appears to have an intermediate level of readability.

In summary, the Privacy Policy strongly emphasizes outlining obligations, prohibitions, and permissions by dominantly using the Deontic modality while minimizing expressions of uncertainty by limiting the use of the Epistemic modality. The use of the Established Equivalent technique in translating those modalities ensures a quite high level of readability in both cases. Additionally, by avoiding complex verb phrases containing multiple modalities, the policy strikes a balance between conveying information accurately and maintaining clarity for its readers.


CONCLUSIONS

Privacy Policy strongly emphasizes outlining obligations, prohibitions, and permissions by dominantly using Deontic modality while minimizing expressions of uncertainty by limiting the use of Epistemic modality and avoiding ambiguity and complexity by restricting the use of verb phrases with two modalities. The use of the Established Equivalent technique in translating those modalities ensures a quite high level of readability in those cases. Additionally, by avoiding complex verb phrases containing multiple modalities, the policy strikes a balance between conveying information accurately and maintaining clarity for its readers.

People use various digital platforms these days, and each platform has a privacy policy and translation. The researcher suggests that in the future, researchers might further develop this study by conducting research on different specific types of phrases or terms related to privacy policies on various digital platforms, using this study as a reference. In order to achieve a high level of translation readability, the researcher also suggests translators use the Established Equivalent technique, a combination of the Established Equivalent + Transposition technique, and the Literal Translation technique in translating verb phrases with modality.

REFERENCES

- Alamsyah, K. (2016). *Kebijakan publik konsep dan aplikasi* (1st ed.). Media Citra Mandiri Press.
- Alwi, H. (1992). *Modalitas dalam bahasa Indonesia* (1st ed.). Kanisius.
- Engliana, & Miranti, I. (2020). Penerjemahan frasa verbal dari bahasa Inggris ke bahasa Indonesia. *Ranah: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa*, 9(1), 61. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.26499/rnh/v9i1.862>
- Libera. (2021). *Pentingnya privacy policy sebagai halaman perjanjian digital dalam website*. <https://libera.id/blogs/privacy-policy-halaman-perjanjian-website/>
- LinovHR. (2022, January 8). *Pentingnya memperhatikan privacy policy sebelum menggunakan software*. <https://www.linovhr.com/pentingnya-privacy-policy-dalam-software/>
- Martunis, M. (2020). The benefits of social media as a modern teaching and learning tool in higher education in Indonesia. *Accentia: Journal of English Language and Education*, 1(2), 70-79.
- Moeliono, A. M., Lapoliwa, H., Alwi, H., Sasangka, W. T. S. S., & Sugiyono. (2017). *Tata bahasa baku bahasa Indonesia* (4th ed.). Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

- 
- Molina, L., & Albir, A. H. (2002). Translation techniques revisited: A dynamic and functionalist approach. *Meta*, 47(4), 498–512. <https://doi.org/10.7202/008033ar>
- Nababan, M., Nuraeni, A., & Sumardiono. (2012). Pengembangan model penilaian kualitas terjemahan. *Kajian Linguistik Dan Sastra*, 24(1), 39–57.
- Nugraha, D. N. S., & Reyta, F. (2019). Modalitas ganda dalam bahasa inggris dan padanannya dalam bahasa indonesia: Kajian sintaksis dan semantik. *Jurnal Muara Ilmu Sosial, Humaniora, dan Seni*, 3(1).
- Palmer, F. R. (1990). *Modality and the English modals* (2nd Ed.) (R. H. Robins, D. Denison, & G. Horrocks, Eds.; 2nd ed.). Longman.
- Santosa, R. (2021). *Dasar-dasar metode penelitian kualitatif kebahasaan*. UNS Press.
- Syafrizal, Marzuki, I., Iqbal, M., Bahri, S., Purba, B., Saragih, H., Pinem, W., Manullang, S. O., Jamaludin, & Mastutie, F. (2021). *Pengantar ilmu sosial* (1st ed.). Yayasan Kita Menulis.
- TikTok. (2022, April 2). *Privacy policy*. <https://www.tiktok.com/legal/page/ro w/privacy-policy/en>
- Trisnawati, I. K., & Bahri, S. (2017). Strategi penerjemahan teks bahasa Inggris ke bahasa Indonesia calon mahasiswa magister dalam ujian masuk program pascasarjana UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. *Getsempena English Education Journal*, 4(2), 84-100.