

Case Marking System and Language Creativity of Bima Language on Social Media TikTok

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Abstract

This study examines the case marking system and linguistic creativity of the Bima language as used on TikTok, focusing on how grammatical variation and creative expression shape linguistic identity in digital spaces. The research employs a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative descriptive analysis and limited quantitative categorization to explore the frequency and form of case-marking patterns. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to understanding how regional languages adapt to new communicative environments while preserving their grammatical essence and sociocultural relevance in the digital era. The findings reveal that the Bima language on TikTok predominantly maintains a nominative-accusative alignment, though occasional ergative-like patterns appear in informal or elliptical utterances. Linguistic creativity manifests through processes such as code-mixing, word simplification, and stylistic innovation, illustrating how speakers negotiate identity and solidarity through digital discourse. These results imply that digital platforms like TikTok can function not only as spaces of linguistic experimentation but also as instruments for regional language revitalization and intergenerational transmission. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its scope, which focuses exclusively on a small sample of Bima TikTok users and does not include data from other platforms or face-to-face interactions. Future research should expand the dataset and incorporate sociolinguistic variables such as gender, education, and network size to capture a more comprehensive picture of language dynamics in online contexts.

Keywords: Bima language, case marking, language creativity, TikTok, absolute-ergative, nominative-accusative, mixed-method.

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INTRODUCTION

Language serves as a dynamic system of human communication that continuously evolves in response to social, cultural, and technological developments. Each language possesses a distinctive grammatical structure that shapes how speakers produce and interpret meaning in both spoken and written forms. As Chomsky (2006) explains, grammar functions as a set of rules governing the use of linguistic elements, enabling speakers to generate utterances that are both meaningful and acceptable within a community. In the digital era, however, the structure and use of language have become increasingly flexible. Social media platforms, particularly TikTok, have created new linguistic environments that allow users to express themselves creatively and spontaneously. These platforms enable speakers to modify and innovate within

their native languages, reflecting both personal and cultural identity in a rapidly changing communicative landscape.

In linguistic typology, case marking represents a key feature for understanding the relationship between grammatical structure and meaning. According to Comrie (1998) and Dixon (2000), the world's languages generally exhibit two major alignment systems: nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive. In the nominative-accusative system, the subject of an intransitive verb (S) is treated like the agent of a transitive verb (A), while the object (P) is marked differently. In contrast, ergative-absolutive languages mark the subject of an intransitive verb (S) the same way as the object of a transitive verb (P), distinguishing them from the agent (A). Studies have identified Bima, or Nggahi Mbojo, as belonging to the nominative-accusative group (Arafiq et al., 2023), while Balinese exemplifies the ergative-absolutive type (Artawa, 2004). Understanding these systems provides valuable insight into how languages encode relationships between actions, participants, and grammatical functions.

The Bima language is spoken by the Mbojo people in eastern Sumbawa Island, including Bima Regency, Bima City, and Dompu Regency. Although Bima coexists with other local languages such as Sambori and Kolo, it remains the dominant medium of communication across the region. Recently, however, the spread of digital platforms has altered traditional linguistic practices. On TikTok, for example, Bima speakers exhibit grammatical adaptations that depart from established norms, revealing a growing influence of linguistic creativity. Herring (2013) identifies several phenomena of case-marking variation in online interaction: simplification or omission of grammatical markers, innovative word formation, and code-mixing. These shifts occur as users prioritize expressiveness and immediacy over grammatical precision, especially within video captions or short oral exchanges. In Bima, pronominal or clitic markers that normally indicate case may be omitted or restructured in such contexts, signaling both simplification and innovation.

This linguistic flexibility, while promoting creative expression, also raises questions about grammatical integrity and language maintenance. Frequent simplification and nonstandard constructions may lead to gradual erosion of the original morphosyntactic system if not balanced by awareness of standard forms. Ridwan (2016) emphasizes that deviations from formal grammar, although often seen as errors, can also represent natural variations arising from communicative efficiency and contextual adaptation. Similarly, Zein and Wagiaty (2018) note that "acceptable language" is defined by what speakers use naturally in everyday situations. From this descriptive perspective, all utterances occurring in authentic contexts whether or not they follow prescriptive norms – are valid linguistic data worthy of analysis.

A descriptive linguistic approach therefore provides a suitable framework for examining how the Bima language evolves within social media communication. Rather than treating nonstandard forms as incorrect, this perspective views them as evidence of the living, adaptive nature of language. The phenomenon of case-marking variation and creative language use on TikTok exemplifies how speakers negotiate between grammatical rules and expressive needs in a digital setting. This aligns with Dixon's (1994) and Comrie's (1989) typological frameworks, which emphasize

understanding the structural flexibility and functional motivation behind language patterns.

Theoretically, this study also draws from the principles of language typology (Greenberg, 1963), digital linguistics (Herring, 2013), and phenomenological linguistics (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Typology provides the comparative basis for identifying case-marking patterns, while digital linguistics explains how online environments influence linguistic form. The phenomenological approach further illuminates how individuals experience and interpret their language use as an expression of cultural identity in virtual spaces. Together, these frameworks enable a comprehensive understanding of how the Bima language adapts morphosyntactically and socially to the demands of digital communication.

Despite growing research on computer-mediated communication, few studies have examined how regional languages like Bima navigate grammatical change and creativity within digital platforms. Most prior research on Indonesian local languages has focused on sociolinguistic variation or language shift in offline contexts. Consequently, there remains a clear research gap in understanding how grammatical systems, particularly case marking, evolve under the influence of online interaction. This study fills that gap by focusing on Bima TikTok users who incorporate their native language into video content and comments, reflecting both linguistic innovation and identity construction.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to describe and analyze the case-marking system of the Bima language as represented in TikTok, as well as its role in linguistic creativity. The specific research questions are as follows: 1) What types of case-marking patterns of the Bima language appear in TikTok content? 2) How is the case-marking system represented as part of linguistic creativity among Bima speakers on TikTok?

By addressing these questions, the study contributes to the broader understanding of how grammatical and creative processes coexist in digital communication. It also provides practical insights for language education and preservation by illustrating how regional languages maintain relevance in new media environments. Ultimately, this research seeks to highlight that linguistic creativity does not signify grammatical decay but rather demonstrates the adaptive capacity of regional languages to remain expressive and meaningful in contemporary communication.

METHOD

This study applies a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative descriptive analysis with light quantitative support. The qualitative component focuses on identifying and interpreting linguistic patterns that appear in Bimanese TikTok content, while the quantitative aspect supports this analysis by measuring the frequency and distribution of the observed grammatical and creative features. This combination enables both in-depth interpretation and empirical description of linguistic tendencies in the data.

The design of this study involves three primary stages. The first stage is data identification, in which relevant TikTok videos and their accompanying comments are selected according to specific criteria. The second stage is qualitative analysis, which

examines how grammatical alignment systems particularly nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive manifest in real digital discourse. This stage also investigates linguistic creativity, such as code-mixing, simplification, and morphological innovation. The third stage is quantitative tabulation, where the occurrence of each linguistic phenomenon is recorded, categorized, and presented in percentage form to show the proportional frequency of each case-marking pattern and creative form.

The use of a mixed-methods approach is justified by the need to describe linguistic structures in depth while also illustrating their statistical prominence within the dataset. Qualitative analysis provides insight into how and why particular linguistic behaviors occur, whereas quantitative data help determine how often these patterns appear and in what proportion. Together, these methods allow for a more comprehensive understanding of how grammatical systems and creative practices interact within digital Bimanese communication.

SOURCE OF DATA

The data in this study are drawn from verbal and written expressions produced by TikTok users who actively use the Bima language in their content. These users represent the younger generation of Bima speakers who interact through short videos, captions, and comment threads. The selection of TikTok as the research site is based on its popularity among youth audiences and its role as a major platform for digital linguistic expression in Indonesia. Five TikTok accounts were chosen purposively for analysis: @tania, @iky, @yusnain, @suharni, and @raembozo0. These creators were selected because they frequently post videos in the Bima language, engage in interactions using Bima through comments or captions, and represent different age and social backgrounds within the younger generation. Their use of language reflects natural, spontaneous communication rather than scripted or edited content, making it suitable for linguistic observation.

Demographically, the participants range from 15 to 25 years old, comprising junior and senior high school students as well as university-level speakers. This age range is particularly relevant because it represents a generation that both inherits and reshapes regional languages in digital contexts. Their participation on TikTok demonstrates how Bima language continues to evolve and adapt as part of youth identity and cultural expression.

The data were collected between 23 February and 23 May 2025, consisting of ten TikTok videos and thirty related comments or transcribed utterances. All material analyzed was publicly available and accessible without direct communication with the content creators. Ethical considerations were maintained by anonymizing personal information and limiting the use of data to publicly shared content. This focus on TikTok provides a representative snapshot of how the Bima language functions within a real-time, interactive, and visual medium. By examining utterances in both video dialogue and comment sections, the study captures how users display grammatical structures, innovate creatively, and negotiate meaning in naturally occurring digital discourse.

SUBJECT OF STUDY

The participants of this study are TikTok users who actively incorporate the Bima language (Nggahi Mbojo) into their video content. These individuals were

selected based on three primary criteria: (1) consistent creation of videos using the Bima language, (2) interaction with audiences through comments or captions written in Bima, and (3) representation across a range of younger age groups, including middle school, high school, and university levels. This demographic was chosen because younger speakers play a crucial role in sustaining and reshaping regional languages within informal digital environments.

Preliminary observation identified five TikTok accounts that met these criteria, namely @tania, @iky, @yusnain, @suharni, and @raembozo0. These content creators frequently produce Bima-language content and exhibit distinctive linguistic features such as innovative expressions, regional idiomatic phrases, and specific uses of case markers all of which are directly relevant to the objectives of this study.

In total, ten videos from these users were selected for detailed analysis, supplemented by thirty additional utterances drawn from user comments and spoken segments within the videos. These samples provided a diverse dataset that enabled the researcher to observe variations in case marking, creative linguistic practices, and the evolving forms of Bima language expression across different online contexts and user experiences.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach focusing on the case marking system and linguistic creativity of the Bima Language as used in TikTok interactions. The data were collected from 10 TikTok videos and 30 user comments, which were selected purposively from publicly available content produced by native Bima speakers. These videos represented spontaneous and creative speech acts that illustrated the natural use of Bima Language in digital contexts.

The selection criteria prioritized videos that (1) contained spoken Bima language rather than written captions only, (2) reflected identifiable speaker identity or interactional context, and (3) exhibited linguistic variation relevant to case marking or creative lexical formation. Each video and its corresponding comments were manually transcribed, translated into English, and categorized based on syntactic and morphological markers that indicated case relations and linguistic innovation. To ensure data validity and analytical reliability, triangulation was conducted through three main procedures. First, peer debriefing was applied by discussing the emerging classifications and interpretations with two linguistics lecturers from Universitas Mataram, ensuring conceptual consistency. Second, member checking was partially applied by confirming selected transcriptions and glosses with native Bima speakers familiar with online discourse. Third, data saturation was monitored and analysis was stopped when no new patterns emerged from additional samples. These steps strengthened both internal validity and trustworthiness of the findings.

The researcher played a dual role as both observer and analyst. As an observer, the researcher passively monitored TikTok content and user interactions without intervention, ensuring the natural flow of communication. As an analyst, the researcher employed qualitative coding to classify case markers, morphological creativity, and pragmatic functions. Reflexivity was maintained throughout the analysis to minimize bias and acknowledge the researcher's interpretive stance as a native speaker of the Bima Language.

Despite these efforts, this study recognizes several methodological limitations. The relatively small dataset, though sufficient for exploratory purposes, may not fully capture the diversity of Bima Language use across all TikTok communities. In addition, the reliance on publicly available videos restricts contextual information such as speaker demographics, motivation, or offline linguistic background. Future research could therefore expand the dataset, employ mixed-method approaches, or integrate ethnographic interviews for deeper socio-pragmatic interpretation.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis in this study employs a qualitative descriptive approach. Since the research focuses on examining the case-marking system and linguistic creativity in Bimanese language (Nggahi Mbojo) on TikTok, the analysis aims to describe grammatical patterns, creative expressions, and contextual meanings found in real user-generated content. Rather than relying on quantitative measures, the analysis emphasizes interpretation identifying how grammatical alignment and creativity function within digital communication to express identity, intention, and social connection. The analytical process began with the identification of relevant Bimanese utterances that contained grammatical or creative significance. Each utterance was examined for word order and syntactic alignment to determine whether it followed a nominative-accusative or ergative-absolutive system, referring to the typological frameworks of Comrie (1989) and Dixon (1994). These grammatical alignments were then classified and compared to reveal distributional tendencies across the collected data.

In the next stage, the utterances were analyzed for linguistic creativity, which included four major categories: simplification, morphological innovation, code-mixing, and digital elements. Each utterance was coded manually based on its creative features, following the conceptual framework proposed by Crystal (2011) and Herring (2012). Simplification referred to reductions or omissions of grammatical markers, morphological innovation referred to modified or new affixations, code-mixing captured the integration of Indonesian or English elements, and digital elements included emojis, hashtags, or visual signs that modified meaning.

Each utterance was analyzed contextually to understand how grammatical structures and creative expressions interact in real communication. Contextual elements such as the purpose of the post, the intended audience, and accompanying visuals or captions were considered essential for accurate interpretation. Through this process, the study identified not only the grammatical tendencies of Bimanese in digital use but also how speakers exploit linguistic flexibility to express individuality and sociocultural identity.

To ensure analytical reliability, all coded data were cross-checked and reviewed multiple times. Peer discussions with linguistic experts were also conducted to validate the classification of ambiguous utterances. Patterns that consistently appeared across the dataset such as shifts in alignment or recurrent creative forms were noted and discussed as indicators of broader linguistic trends in Bimanese digital communication. Finally, conclusions were drawn from these recurring grammatical and creative patterns. The findings were presented descriptively and supported by representative examples from the TikTok data, showing how the Bimanese language

maintains its grammatical system while adapting dynamically to the expressive demands of social media. This interpretive approach ensures that the analysis remains theoretically grounded while accurately reflecting the natural linguistic practices of Bimanese speakers in digital spaces.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of 30 utterances from 10 TikTok videos indicates two co-existing alignment patterns in digital Bimanese use: nominative-accusative (20/30; 66.7%) and absolutive-ergative (10/30; 33.3%). Linguistic creativity manifests primarily as grammatical simplification (40%), morphological innovation (30%), code-mixing (20%), and digital elements/technological influence (10%). The following sections unpack these quantitative tendencies with qualitative, contextualized readings of representative examples and interpret them through typology and sociolinguistic theory.

The Dominance and Variation of Word Order in Bima Language Use on TikTok

In syntactic typology, word order refers to the sequence of elements in a sentence primarily the Subject (S), Verb (V), and Object (O) and is one of the key parameters that differentiates languages. According to Comrie (1989), languages can be categorized based on their dominant word order into types such as SVO (Subject-Verb-Object), SOV, VSO, and so on. Word order helps indicate grammatical relations and plays a crucial role in the clarity and efficiency of communication. The following is data on SVO sentences obtained from the TikTok app through 10 videos and 5 content creator accounts that were selected:

Table 1. Examples of SVO Word Order in Bima TikTok Utterances

No	SVO
1	<p><i>Ita ke Sarai Pahu KK mda sih KK (S-V-O)</i></p> <p>You -ke -look -like -face -sister -my -sih 1SG -REL -Verb -like -face -OBJ -2SG -EMO</p> <p>“You look like my sister sis”</p>
2	<p><i>mu lu’u si dei kehidupan nahu (S-V-O)</i></p> <p>You -enter -si -into -life -me 1SG -verb -EMO -prep -OBJ -2SG</p> <p>“You come into my life”</p>
3	<p><i>nggomi doho ma lao ntanda konser, lao ntanda au-au re ain mawu si (S-V-O)</i></p> <p>You -guys -ma -go -watching -concert -go -watching -anything -re -don’t -drunk -si</p>

1SG -N -ma -go -verb -OBJ -go -verb -PRO -EMPH -
AUX -verb -EMO

"Those of you who go to concerts, go to whatever, don't get drunk"

4 *Ita Rau malao bahasa bima Mada ke asli bima (S-V-O)*

You -also -ma- -can -language -Bima -ke -real -Bima
1SG -ADV -PREF -can -language -OBJ -EMPH -ADJ -OBJ

"You can also speak Bima, I am originally from Bima"

5 *nahu aa wara wa'ik dipaha ra onoku (S-V-O)*

I -aa -have -grandson -me -for -feed -ra -swallow -me
1SG -EMPH -have -OBJ -2SG -PREP -verb -LOC -verb -3SG

"I have grandson who need to be fed and watered"

6 *nggomi dohom bade? (S-V)*

You -are -know
1SD -N -verb

"You guys already know?"

7 *nggomi pasti bangga dan doum tua nggomi past bangga kok (S-V-O)*

You -must -proud -and -parents -you -must -be -proud -kok
1SG -verb -ADJ -CON -OBJ -2SG -verb -PREF -ADJ -CLF

"You must be proud and your parents must be proud"

8 *bang wara sidoho ma nuntu kiha ita kande re (S-V-O)*

Bro -exist -people -ma -talking -bad -you -earlier -re
1SG -verb -OBJ -REEL -N -ADJ -2SG -EXC -LOC

"Bro, earlier someone said something bad about you"

9 *nggomi doho aina perna nggahi kandake aka dou siwe (S-V-O)*

You -guys -don't -ever -say -like -this -to -women
1SG -N -AUX -ADV -verb -PREP -PRON -PREP -OBJ

"You should never say things like this to a woman"

- 10 *nggomi dohom bade au si dohom taki kambowo honda tando dou siwe ka (S-V-O)*

You -guys -knew -what -si -they -often -noisy -motorcycle -in
front -women -ka
1SG -N -verb -PRON -EMO -1SL -ADV -ADJ -N -ADV
-OBJ -LOC

"You know those guys who often accelerate their motorbikes in front of women"

- 11 *nggomi doho ke indo ja na puasa si eda nahu (S-V-O)*

You -guys -ke -do not -na -fasting -si -saw -I
1SG -N -LOC -AUX -EMO -N -EMO -verb -OBJ

"I see that you guys are not fasting"

- 12 *nahu ma henga mena rahasia menam ke (S-V-O)*

I -ma -open -all -secret -you -mu -ke
1SG -PREF -verb -PRON -N -OBJ -SUF -LOC

"I will reveal all your secrets"

- 13 *ndaiku dou Dompu pala ampodeku ringa bahasa Dompu selama ake bahasa Mbojo (S-V-O)*

I -someone -dompu -but -recently -ku -hear -language -
dompu -during -usual -language -mbojo
1SG -N -OBJ -CON -ADV -AFX -verb -OBJ -PREP
-ADJ -N

"I am a Dompu resident, I have only just heard the Dompu language, previously it was the Mbojo language"

- 14 *ngomi Rau re dou mpanga (S-V-O)*

You -also -re -someone -robber
1SG -ADV -LOC -OBJ -N

"You are also a robber"

- 15 *nggomi doho mone re bungka cili kaimu hinti rongko labo lowi mie (S-V-O)*

You -guys -man -re -break -hide -kai -mu -suck -cigarette -
with -boiled -noodle
1SG -N -LOC -verb -N -kai -OBJ -verb -N -PREP

-verb -N

"You guys break your fast in secret by smoking and cooking noodles"

16 *mada wati butuh piti ita aba ee (S-V-O)*

I -don't -need -money -you -brother -ee
1SG -AUX -verb -OBJ -2SG -N -AFX

"I don't need your money, man"

17 *ita ke sibuk poda si ba karawi ncau-ncau (S-V-O)*

You -ke -busy -too -si -because -work -continuously
1SG -LOC -verb -ADV -si -CON -OBJ -ADV

"You are very busy, brother, because you work continuously"

18 *nahum temani nggomi dari nol (S-V-O)*

I -will -accompany -you -from -zero
1SG -AUX -verb -OBJ -PREP -N

"I am the one who encourages you when you are down"

19 *nahuma semangati nggomi dari ta awa na (S-V-O)*

I -will -encouraging -you -from -at -down -na
1SG -AUX -verb -OBJ -PREP -PREP -ADV -AFX

"I am the one who encourages you from below"

20 *nahum temani nggomi dari mabu teka mabu teka mboda wali (S-V-O)*

I -will -accompany -you -from -down -up -down -up -back -again
1SG -AUX -verb -OBJ -PREP -verb -N -verb -N -ADV -ADV

"I'm the one who's been with you through all your ups and downs"

The graph below shows a comparison between word orders found in the collected data:

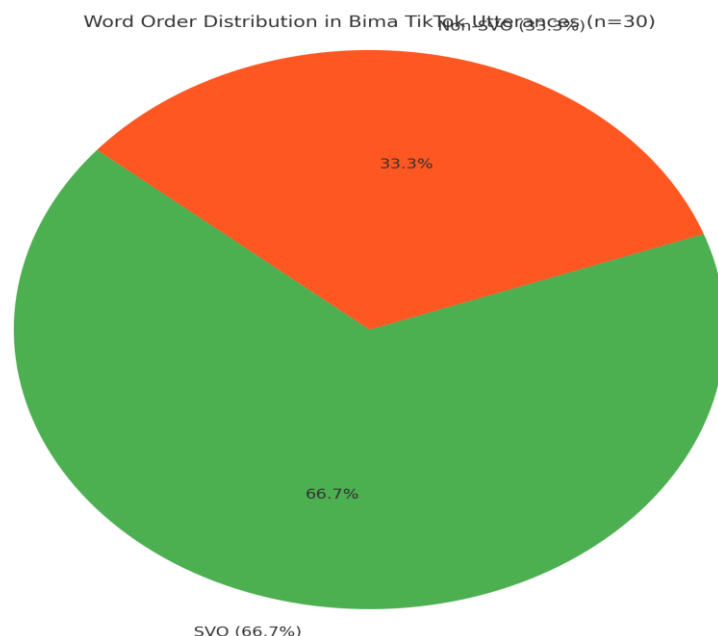


Figure 1. Distribution of Word Order Types in Bima TikTok Utterances

The Bima language shows a rich variety of case-marking strategies that reflect its typological flexibility. Based on 30 utterances drawn from 10 TikTok videos including both spoken expressions by content creators and user comments two primary alignment systems are identified: nominative-accusative and absolutive-ergative.

Nominative-Accusative Alignment

Nominative-accusative alignment is the system in which the subject of both transitive and intransitive verbs is marked the same (nominative), while the direct object (accusative) is marked differently. This structure appears frequently in the data, and is marked through the use of pronouns (e.g., *nahu*, *ita*, *nggomi*), object particles (*doho*, *ra*), and syntactic positions.

Table 4.2 Examples of Nominative-Accusative Alignment in Bima Utterances

No	Nominative Accusative
1	<p><i>Ita ke Sarai Pahu KK mda sih KK (S-V-O)</i></p> <p>You -ke -look -like -face -sister -my -sih 1SG -REL -Verb -like -face -OBJ -2SG -EMO</p> <p>“You look like my sister sis”</p>
2	<p><i>mu lu’u si dei kehidupan nahu (S-V-O)</i></p> <p>You -enter -si -into -life -me 1SG -verb -EMO -prep -OBJ -2SG</p>

"You come into my life"

- 3 *nggomi doho ma lao ntanda konser, lao ntanda au-au re ain mawu si (S-V-O)*

You -guys -ma -go -watching -concert -go -watching -anything -re
-don't -drunk -si

1SG -N -ma -go -verb -OBJ -go -verb -PRO -EMPH -
AUX -verb -EMO

"Those of you who go to concerts, go to whatever, don't get drunk"

- 4 *Ita Rau malao bahasa bima Mada ke asli bima (S-V-O)*

You -also -ma- -can -language -Bima -ke -real -Bima
1SG -ADV -PREF -can -language -OBJ -EMPH -ADJ -OBJ

"You can also speak Bima, I am originally from Bima"

- 5 *nahu aa wara wa'ik dipaha ra onoku (S-V-O)*

I -aa -have -grandson -me -for -feed -ra -swallow -me
1SG -EMPH -have -OBJ -2SG -PREP -verb -LOC -verb -3SG

"I have grandson who need to be fed and watered"

- 6 *nggomi dohom bade? (S-V)*

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1SD -N -verb

"You guys already know?"

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You -must -proud -and -parents -you -must -be -proud -kok
1SG -verb -ADJ -CON -OBJ -2SG -verb -PREF -ADJ -CLF

"You must be proud and your parents must be proud"

- 8 *bang wara sidoho ma nuntu kiha ita kande re (S-V-O)*

Bro -exist -people -ma -talking -bad -you -earlier -re
1SG -verb -OBJ -REEL -N -ADJ -2SG -EXC -LOC

"Bro, earlier someone said something bad about you"

- 9 *nggomi doho aina perna nggahi kandake aka dou siwe (S-V-O)*

You -guys -don't -ever -say -like -this -to -women
 1SG -N -AUX -ADV -verb -PREP -PRON -PREP -OBJ

"You should never say things like this to a woman"

- 10 *nggomi dohom bade au si dohom taki kambowo honda tando dou siwe ka (S-V-O)*

You -guys -knew -what -si -they -often -noisy -motorcycle -in
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 1SG -N -verb -PRON -EMO -1SL -ADV -ADJ -N -ADV
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"You know those guys who often accelerate their motorbikes in front of women"

- 11 *nggomi doho ke indo ja na puasa si eda nahu (S-V-O)*

You -guys -ke -do not -na -fasting -si -saw -I
 1SG -N -LOC -AUX -EMO -N -EMO -verb -OBJ

"I see that you guys are not fasting"

- 12 *nahu ma henga mena rahasia menam ke (S-V-O)*

I -ma -open -all -secret -you -mu -ke
 1SG -PREF -verb -PRON -N -OBJ -SUF -LOC

"I will reveal all your secrets"

- 13 *ndaiku dou Dompou pala ampodeku ringa bahasa Dompou selama ake bahasa Mbojo (S-V-O)*

I -someone -dompou -but -recently -ku -hear -language -
 dompou -during -usual -language -mbojo
 1SG -N -OBJ -CON -ADV -AFX -verb -OBJ -PREP
 -ADJ -N

"I am a Dompou resident, I have only just heard the Dompou language, previously it was the Mbojo language"

- 14 *ngomi Rau re dou mpanga (S-V-O)*

You -also -re -someone -robber
 1SG -ADV -LOC -OBJ -N

"You are also a robber"

- 15 *nggomi doho mone re bungka cili kaimu hinti rongko labo lowi mie (S-V-O)*

You -guys -man -re -break -hide -kai -mu -suck -cigarette -
with -boiled -noodle
1SG -N -LOC -verb -N -kai -OBJ -verb -N -PREP
-verb -N

"You guys break your fast in secret by smoking and cooking noodles"

- 16 *mada wati butuh piti ita aba ee (S-V-O)*

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"You are very busy, brother, because you work continuously"

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"I am the one who encourages you from below"

- 20 *nahum temani nggomi dari mabu teka mabu teka mboda wali (S-V-O)*

I -will -accompany -you -from -down -up -down -up -back -again
1SG -AUX -verb -OBJ -PREP -verb -N -verb -N -ADV -ADV

"I'm the one who's been with you through all your ups and downs"

The analysis revealed that the nominative–accusative pattern frequently occurs in direct and interactional utterances where speakers address identifiable addressees and pursue immediate communicative goals such as giving advice, making

statements, or expressing moral judgment. For instance, in the utterance “*Nggomi doho mone re bungka cili kaimu*” (“You guys break your fast in secret”), the speaker directly addresses peers in a brief evaluative TikTok clip, indexing moral reproach and social closeness. The explicit presence of the subject *nggomi* and the overtly marked object indicate a nominative-accusative structure. Such constructions are prevalent in short, directed messages that rely on clarity and immediacy, two features supported by TikTok’s communicative affordances.

These utterances consistently show subject-object differentiation. Subjects are marked by independent pronouns (*nggomi*, *ita*, *nahu*), while objects are introduced using *doho*, *ke*, or positional emphasis. This system appears to dominate digital communication.

Absolutive-Ergative Alignment

The absolutive-ergative system treats the subject of an intransitive verb and the object of a transitive verb similarly (absolutive), while the agent of a transitive verb is marked differently (ergative). Though not as frequent, this alignment also appears in the data and is particularly common in narrative-style or emotional utterances.

Table 3. Examples of Absolutive-Ergative Alignment in Bima Utterances

No	Absolutive Ergative									
1	<i>deh nuntu kiha nahu babau wali?</i>									
	deh	-talk	-break	-I	-what	-again				
	PCTL	-verb	-ADJ	-1SG	-Q	-ADV				
	“Why are you talking about me again?”									
2	<i>do'a mpa ma taho ru'u sidoho aka pde</i>									
	pray	-mpa	-ma	-good	-for	-them	-that	-then		
	V	-PTCL	-PTCL	-N	-PREP	-OBJ	-PTCL	-ADV		
	“Just pray for the best for them later”									
3	<i>karakan doum ntua nahu rau?</i>									
	talking	-parents	-I	-also						
	V	-OBJ	-1SG	-ADV						
	“My parents talked about it too?”									
4	<i>pai tada kopem nggomi doho, ti disam katada lokom</i>									
	pai	-seen	-scar	-you	-guys,	-no	-brave	-seen	-stomach	-m
	PTCL	-ADJ	-N	-1SG	-N	-ADV	-N	-ADJ	-N	-SUF

“Try to see your scars, don't you dare show your stomachs?”

5 *di ru'u ba nggomi doho ma perna selingku ncau re*

di -for -ba -you -guys -ma -ever -cheating -often -re
PTCL -PREP -PTCL -1SG -N -PREF -ADV -verb -ADV -AFX

“For those of you who have ever cheated”

6 *palas sama pa bona la'o pahu nggomi doho ede*

evidently -same -pa -ugly -with -face -you -guys -those
ADV -ADJ -PTCL -ADJ -CON -N -1SG -N -PRON

“Turns out it's as ugly as your faces”

7 *dukung ba Mada Eli edeniw bang*

support -by -I -voice -that -niw -bro
verb -PREP -1SG -verb -CON -PTCL -N

“Supported by me that voice bro”

8 *lucu2 poda ita doho ke*

funny -too -you -guys -ke
ADJ -ADV -1SG -N -EMPH

“You guys are so funny”

9 *kau ku ncao nahu la'o dou*

ask -ku -fight -I -with -people
verb -EMPH -N -1SG -CON -N

“I was ask to fight with someone”

10 *wa'ur rewo la'o janu mpinga wali wa'i ake*

already -wandering -with -janu -deaf -again -grandmother -this
ADV -verb -CON -1SG -ADJ -ADV -OBJ -EMPH

“That deaf Janu is out wandering around again”

In contrast, absolutive-ergative patterns tend to emerge in narrative or emotionally charged posts, where the agent is often omitted or backgrounded and attention is shifted toward the patient or thematic participant. For example, in “*Wa'ur*

rewo la'o janu mpinga wali wa'i ake ("That deaf Janu is out wandering around again"), the focus lies on the referent's state rather than on an explicit agentive action. The syntactic prominence of the patient-like element and the implicitness of the agent align with typological observations that ergative structures typically surface in discourse contexts where topicality or affectedness drives alignment choices (Dixon, 1994; De Hoop & Malchukov, 2008).

In these examples, the object and subject often appear in similar syntactic forms, with little overt marking. The agent is emphasized through pragmatic context or by specific verbs. The table below shows the comparison between the two:

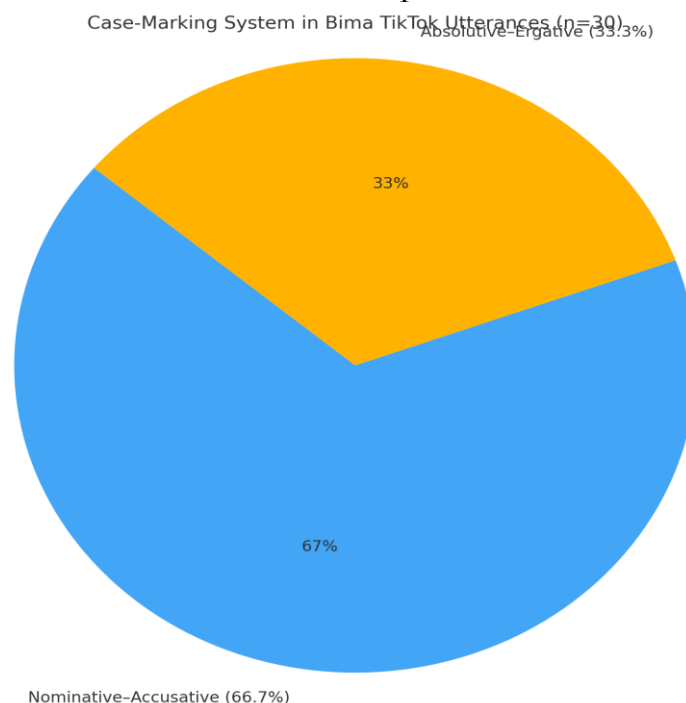


Figure 2. Comparison of Nominative–Accusative and Abslutive–Ergative Alignments

Speech Act Levels: Layers of Meaning and Emotional Resonance

To determine which alignment system is more dominant, a quantitative formula was applied:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Number of Case Type Sentences}}{\text{Total Sentences}} \times 100$$

- Nominative–Accusative: $\frac{20}{30} \times 100 = 66,7\%$
- Abslutive–Ergative: $\frac{10}{30} \times 100 = 33,3\%$

This result clearly shows a tendency toward the nominative-accusative alignment, which is observed in 66,7% of the total utterances. This pattern is strengthened by the repeated use of subject and object pronouns and markers. The coexistence of both systems, however, reflects the dynamic and flexible nature of spoken Bima especially in informal settings like TikTok where grammar interacts with discourse goals, emotion, and creativity.

Language Creativity on TikTok

Aside from grammatical structures, TikTok users also show rich language creativity, which appears in various forms:

Table 4.4 Instances of Grammatical Simplification in Bima TikTok Speech

No	Simplification
1	<p><i>auk ngupa kaim mada?</i></p> <p>why -k -looking -you -me ADV -PREF -verb -N -1SG</p> <p>“Why are you looking for me?”</p>
2	<p><i>iyo ja si, perasaan wa’ur cola akan sangadin</i></p> <p>Yes -ja -si, -feeling -already -paid -last -night PTCL -N -ADV -verb -ADV -N</p> <p>“Ya, I feel like I paid last night”</p>
3	<p><i>Nggomi dohom bade?</i></p> <p>You -are -know 1SD -N -verb</p> <p>“You guys already know?”</p>
4	<p><i>Karakan doum ntua nahu rau?</i></p> <p>talking -parents -I -also V -OBJ -1SG -ADV</p> <p>“My parents talked about it too?”</p>
5	<p><i>Kau ku ncao nahu la’o dou</i></p> <p>ask -ku -fight -I -with -people verb -EMPH -N -1SG -CON -N</p> <p>“I was ask to fight with someone”</p>
6	<p><i>lao ntanda au-au re ain mawu si</i></p> <p>Go -watching -anything -re -don’t -drunk -si Go -verb -PRO -EMPH -AUX -verb -EMO</p>

“Those of you who go to concerts, go to whatever, don't get drunk

7 *Nahum temani nggomi dari nol*

I -will -accompany -you -from -zero
1SG -AUX -verb -OBJ -PREP -N

“I am the one who encourages you when you are down”

8 *Nahuma semangati nggomi dari ta awa na*

I -will -encouraging -you -from -at -down -na
1SG -AUX -verb -OBJ -PREP -PREP -ADV -AFX

“I am the one who encourages you from below”

9 *Nahum temani nggomi dari mabu teka*

I -who -accompany -you -from -down -up
1SG -PRON -verb -OBJ -PREP -verb -N

“I'm the one who accompanies you through thick and thin”

10 *Ngomi Rau re dou mpanga*

You -also -re -someone -robber
1SG -ADV -LOC -OBJ -N

“You are also a robber”

11 *Nggomi doho ke indo ja na puasa si eda nahu*

You -guys -ke -do not -na -fasting -si -saw -I
1SG -N -LOC -AUX -EMO -N -EMO -verb -OBJ

“I see that you guys are not fasting”

12 *Nggomi doho ma lao ntanda konser*

nggomi doho ma lao ntanda konser, lao ntanda au-au re ain mawu si (S-V-O)

You -guys -ma -go -watching -concert
1SG -N -ma -go -verb -OBJ

“Those of you who go to concerts”

Table 5. Examples of Morphological Innovation in Bima Language Use

No	Morphological Innovation
1	<p><i>Bona z nee Angi aka kengge sori</i></p> <p>Ugly -ja -want -mutual -at -side -river ADJ -PTCL -verb -ADJ -PREP -N -OBJ</p> <p>“It's so ugly to date on the riverbank”</p>
2	<p><i>seke landa lero btau dou</i></p> <p>Often -sell -everywhere -own -people ADV -verb -ADV -verb -N</p> <p>“Often sell other people's stuff everywhere”</p>
3	<p><i>salfok bungo honggo re</i></p> <p>Misfocus -tuft -hair -re SLANK -verb -OBJ -AFX</p> <p>“Misplaced focus on hair pulling”</p>
4	<p><i>naw ipi kuw pili naw tuta ede sih</i></p> <p>na -really -kuw -pain -naw -head -that -sih PTCL -ADV -EMO -N -PTCL -OBJ -CON -AFX</p> <p>“His head must have hurt a lot”</p>
5	<p><i>ipi ja raw bate wea na tuta na</i></p> <p>Really -ja -raw -slam -wea -na -head -na ADV -EMO -PTCL -verb -AFX -PTCL -N -AFX</p> <p>“He slammed his head really hard”</p>
6	<p><i>paksa poda rwi ede</i></p> <p>Force -very -work -that N -ADV -verb -CON</p> <p>“You're so pushy”</p>
7	<p><i>ake tho ghi dou lnga</i></p>

This -taho -said -people -friend
 PRON -PTCL -ADJ -N -OBJ

“This is what people say, my friend”

8 *di wa'a ka iha ghi dou*

For -bring -ka -broke -said -people
 PREP -verb -PTCL -ADV -ADJ -N

“To be taken away, people say”

9 *Pemikiran ndou dho mbuip primitiv na*

Thinking -people -dho -still -primitive -na
 verb -N -PTCL -ADV -ADJ -AFX

“These people's thinking is still primitive”

Table 6. Instances of Code-Mixing and Code-Switching in Bima TikTok Discourse

No	Code-Mixing / Code-Switching
1	<p><i>ndadi kai ndai sesama manusia re kana'e mpa saba</i></p> <p>So -kai -we -fellow -human -re -enlarge -mpa -patient ADV -EMPH -1SG -N -OBJ -AFX -verb -PTCL -ADJ</p> <p>“So we fellow humans are more patient”</p>
2	<p><i>Kalosa nari jak oi re loken ipi keren</i></p> <p>Take -it -out -slow -jak -water -re -so -very -cool verb -PTCL -PTCL -ADJ -EMPH -OBJ -AFX -CON -ADV -ADJ</p> <p>“Take out some of the water to make it look really cool”</p>
3	<p><i>Dukung ba Mada Eli edeniw bang</i></p> <p>Support -by -me -voice -that -niw -brother verb -PREP -1SG -N -CON -PTCL -OBJ</p> <p>“I support what you said, bro”</p>
4	<p><i>Mada wati butuh piti ita aba ee</i></p> <p>I -don't -need -money -you -brother -ee</p>

1SG -AUX -verb -N -OBJ -N -AFX

"I don't need your money, brother"

5 *Ndaiku dou Dompupala ampodeku ringa*

I'am -someone -dompup -but -newly -I -hear
1SG -N -OBJ -CON -ADV -2SG -verb

"I am from Dompup, but I just heard"

6 *Bang wara sidoho ma nuntu kiha*

Brother -there -people -that -talk -bad
1SG -ADV -OBJ -CON -verb -ADJ

"There are people talking about it"

Table 7. Examples of Technological Influence in Bima TikTok Utterances

No	Influence of Technology
1	<p><i>Maira sepe wau 100</i></p> <p>Come -ra -borrow -first -one -hundred verb -AFX -verb -ADV -N -OBJ</p> <p>"Here, borrow a hundred first"</p>
2	<p><i>ampo silahturahmi wati ncepa sepe ulu saratu</i></p> <p>In order to -relationship -not -broken -borrow -first -one -hundred CON -N -ADV -ADJ -verb -ADV -N -OBJ</p> <p>"So that the relationship doesn't break off, borrow a hundred first"</p>
3	<p><i>dou ra nee ku 🤔👉🤔</i></p> <p>Someone -ra -want -I OBJ -AFX -verb -1SG</p> <p>"The person I like"</p>

The linguistic creativity displayed by Bima speakers on TikTok serves not only communicative efficiency but also the construction and negotiation of social identity. This creativity is reflected in several interconnected strategies. First, simplification

through ellipsis and reduced morphology, such as the omission of subjects or particles creates a sense of immediacy and shared understanding among users. For example, the expression “*Ngupa kaim mada?*” (“Looking for me?”) omits the explicit subject, signaling solidarity and an in-group orientation where brevity and implicature are valued. Second, morphological innovation functions as a form of identity marking. Users coin new affixes, modify reduplication patterns, and blend morphemes playfully to display creativity and local pride, often embedding humor and cultural familiarity into their digital discourse. Third, code-mixing between Bima, Indonesian, and English resources allows speakers to perform bilingual or even multilingual identities, positioning themselves simultaneously within the Bima linguistic community and a broader national or global context (Androutsopoulos, 2006). Altogether, these practices demonstrate that linguistic creativity on TikTok is performative and socially meaningful; users consciously craft personas humorous, moralizing, nostalgic, or modern through linguistic choices that index both individual expression and communal belonging.

The graph below shows the pattern of language creativity in the Bima language that occurs in the TikTok application:

Language Creativity in Bima TikTok Utterances (n=30)

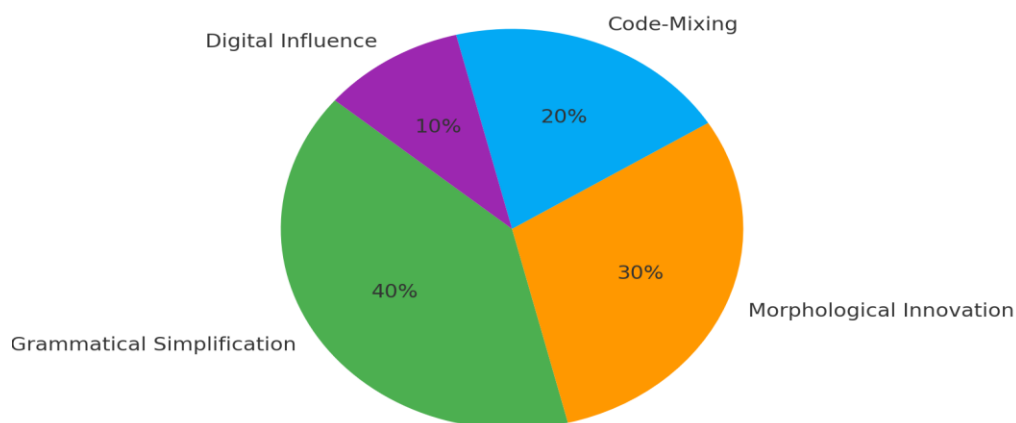


Figure 4.3 Distribution of Language Creativity Forms in Bima TikTok Discourse

Syntactic Patterns and Word Order Tendencies in Bima TikTok Discourse

In many nominative–accusative languages, such as English and Indonesian, the typical word order is SVO, where both transitive and intransitive subjects are marked similarly, while the object is positioned after the verb. The Bima language, as previously described in typological studies (Donohue, 2008), generally follows the same pattern SVO with some flexibility depending on the pragmatic needs of the speaker. According to Comrie (1978) and Dixon (1994), word order in a language is closely related to its morphosyntactic alignment; nominative–accusative languages tend to exhibit SVO order, whereas ergative–absolutive languages more often prefer SOV or show greater word order variation. In the context of this research, the word

order of TikTok utterances in the Bima language reveals a dominant SVO tendency, aligning with its underlying nominative-accusative system, while also showing creative deviations in informal or expressive contexts. This section elaborates on the patterns and flexibility found in the utterances, using data from the 30 speech samples collected across 10 TikTok videos.

The analysis of updated utterances in Bima TikTok discourse reveals that the Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) structure remains the dominant word order among speakers. Out of 30 utterances analyzed, 20 (63.7%) clearly follow the SVO pattern, reflecting the consistency of Bima's traditional syntactic alignment. This finding aligns with the nominative-accusative case-marking structure of the language, where both intransitive and transitive subjects receive similar treatment, and objects are distinctly marked. The SVO pattern is most frequently used in declarative and action-driven utterances, where the speaker intends to communicate directly and unambiguously. These expressions often involve commands, observations, or expressions of emotion. As seen in the chart, SVO structures dominate with 63.7% (20 utterances), followed by non-SOV patterns at 33.3% (10 utterances).

Examples of Dominant SVO Pattern:

- "*Nggomi doho mone re bungka cili kaimu.*"
(You break your fast in secret.)
(S): *Nggomi*, (V): *doho mone re*, (O): *bungka cili kaimu*
- "*Nahu aa wara wa'ik.*"
(I have a grandchild.)
S: *Nahu*, V: *wara*, O: *wa'ik*
- "*Nahu ma henga mena rahasia menam ke*"
(I will reveal all your secrets)
S: *Nahu*, V: *henga*, O: *rahasia menam*

Non-SVO is frequently used to emphasize the object or topical element of the sentence, as in the utterance:

- "*Sara ita bura!*"
(Sara, you are white!)
S: *Sara*, O: *ita*, V: *bura*

Here, the object (Sara) is placed at the beginning to highlight or dramatize the message, which is typical in emotional or sarcastic expressions.

Non-SVO constructions, appearing in 33.3% of the data (10 utterances), reflect subject ellipsis, a common strategy in informal or conversational Bima, especially when the subject is inferable from the context. This ellipsis contributes to linguistic economy and immediacy, which are hallmarks of digital discourse:

- "*Ngupa kaim mada?*"
(Looking for me?)
V: *Ngupa*, S: *kaim*, O: *mada*

The remaining 33.3% (10 utterances) show stylistic or narrative reordering, often used for dramatic effect or creative emphasis in storytelling contexts. These findings confirm that while SVO remains structurally dominant, TikTok speakers of Bima actively manipulate word order to achieve pragmatic, stylistic, and affective goals. In this regard, word order becomes not only a grammatical phenomenon but also a tool

of digital creativity, shaped by both linguistic tradition and the communicative demands of modern media.

These findings show that although the SVO structure remains dominant, there is diversity in the word order strategies used by Bima TikTok users to adapt to the digital context. This variation is not merely a deviation, but a form of linguistic creativity adapted to expressive, dramatic, and communicative purposes. TikTok encourages short and powerful forms of communication, so that language structures also adapt.

A comparison between digital and non-digital uses of the Bima language, as documented by Arafiq (2020) and Yusra et al. (2016), reveals both continuity and divergence in grammatical and pragmatic behavior. In terms of continuity, the core pronominal paradigms particularly the coexistence of full pronouns and clitics and the general preference for subject-verb-object (SVO) word order remain consistent across contexts. The frequent use of independent pronouns such as *nahu*, *ita*, and *nggomi* on TikTok mirrors their distribution in traditional, offline speech, reflecting stability in the underlying grammatical system. However, notable divergence arises in the digital setting, where speakers employ greater ellipsis, faster morphological innovation, and more frequent code-mixing with Indonesian or English. Unlike in offline narratives or formal discourse, where morphological markers and full clause structures are preserved, digital interactions tend to favor brevity, playfulness, and multimodal expression. These tendencies suggest that TikTok amplifies informal linguistic features already present in spoken Bima but recontextualizes them within a compressed, performative environment. Consequently, TikTok does not introduce entirely new grammatical forms but rather repackages existing linguistic resources for platform-specific purposes such as humor, rapid communication, and identity expression. This reinforces the view that digital media mediate rather than replace language-internal constraints, allowing traditional grammatical structures to evolve dynamically within new communicative ecologies.

Case Marking Alignment and Grammatical Shifts in Bima Language

Based on the analysis of 30 utterances in the Bima language on TikTok, it was found that the most dominant case marker system was nominative-accusative, which appeared 20 times or 66.7% of the total data. This pattern reflects the grammatical structure common in the Bima language, where the subjects of transitive and intransitive verbs are treated uniformly, while objects are treated differently. The dominance of this pattern indicates that even though the context of its use is in social media, which tends to be casual and expressive, speakers still maintain the stable and consistent basic structure of the Bima language.

On the other hand, there were also 10 instances or 33.3% that showed the use of the absolutive-ergative pattern. Although not the main pattern, its appearance is quite significant and indicates linguistic flexibility and creativity. In typological theory, Comrie (1978) and Dixon (1994) argue that ergative alignment systems often emerge in discourse under pragmatic motivations such as narrative focus or topicality rather than purely grammatical rules. This aligns with the data, where the ergative-like constructions in Bima TikTok utterances appear in narrative, expressive, or informal

styles. Speakers often omit the subject or emphasize the object and the verb, which fits with the fast-paced and meaning-dense nature of communication on TikTok.

To determine which alignment system is more dominant in the Bima language as used on TikTok, a simple quantitative formula was applied. Based on the calculation before, the nominative-accusative alignment appeared in 20 out of 30 utterances, representing 66.7% of the data, while the absolutive-ergative alignment occurred in 10 out of 30 utterances, or 33.3%. This distribution clearly indicates a strong tendency toward the nominative-accusative structure, in which subjects of both transitive and intransitive verbs are treated similarly, and objects are distinctively marked consistent with the traditional grammatical structure of the Bima language. The dominance of this pattern is further reinforced by the frequent and consistent use of subject and object pronouns, as well as overt case markers. However, the presence of ergative-like structures, though less frequent, is significant and points to the flexibility of Bima speakers in adapting their language to suit the digital environment.

These alternative structures often reflect pragmatic choices such as omitting the subject, foregrounding the object, or reordering elements for stylistic effect suggesting that the spoken Bima language in digital discourse is not fixed but instead responsive and creatively shaped by the communicative demands of platforms like TikTok. Ultimately, these findings directly address the research question regarding how the Bima case-marking system manifests in online discourse, showing that while traditional alignment remains dominant, it is simultaneously evolving under the influence of digital communication styles and expressive user intent.

Although a complete demographic profile of TikTok users was not available due to platform limitations, several preliminary sociolinguistic patterns emerged from the selected data. Age appeared to play an important role: younger creators particularly adolescents and young adults tended to engage in more morphological play, abbreviation, and code-mixing, reflecting broader trends of linguistic innovation among youth in Indonesia. Variation was also evident across genres and communicative contexts. Narrative or emotionally expressive videos, such as storytelling or personal testimony, often displayed longer phrase structures and ergative-like alignments that emphasized thematic or experiential meanings. In contrast, humorous or directive clips typically adopted compact subject-verb-object constructions with simplified morphology to achieve clarity, immediacy, and comedic timing. Another salient dimension was the distinction between locally oriented and diasporic creators. Those emphasizing local Bima identity and cultural references retained fuller morphological marking and lexical purity, while those addressing wider, non-local audiences incorporated more Indonesian and English elements to enhance accessibility. Taken together, these observations indicate that social variables age, genre, and audience orientation significantly shape alignment preferences and creative linguistic expression. While further research with a larger and more demographically detailed sample would be necessary to quantify these patterns, the current findings already highlight the influence of social dynamics on how Bima speakers perform linguistic creativity in digital spaces.

Linguistic Creativity and Digital Innovation in Bima TikTok Expressions

Based on an analysis of 30 examples of Bima language speech on TikTok, it was found that the most dominant form of linguistic creativity was grammatical simplification, with a total of 12 examples or 40% of the total. This phenomenon is evident in the simplification of sentence structure, such as the omission of subjects, grammatical particles, and the use of elliptical forms that still retain the main meaning. This indicates a tendency for speakers to adapt to digital communication styles that demand quick and concise expression.

Next, morphological innovation ranks second with 9 data points or 30%, reflecting speakers' creativity in forming or modifying words through the combination of local morphemes, the omission of affixes, and the creation of new terms specific to the social media context. Meanwhile, code-mixing appears in 6 data points or 20%, indicating the mixing of Bima language with Indonesian language and popular terms as part of the multilingual identity of the younger generation. Lastly, the influence of technology or digital media only appears in 3 data points or 10%, but remains significant as it shows how narrative style, visual expression, and TikTok culture contribute to shaping language use. In conclusion, linguistic creativity in Bima-language TikTok speech not only demonstrates speakers' flexibility in maintaining local identity but also illustrates a dynamic adaptation process to the digital space. Social media platforms like TikTok serve as a creative arena where the Bima language evolves through a blend of traditional forms and modern communication styles.

These creative strategies reveal that TikTok is not just a platform for entertainment, but also a digital space where identity, humor, and local pride are linguistically constructed. Bima language speakers combine tradition and trend, often mixing multiple strategies in one utterance. This supports Androutsopoulos (2006) who emphasizes how social media fosters hybrid and performance-oriented language practices. The coexistence of grammatical alignment variation and linguistic creativity demonstrates how Bimanese adapts dynamically to digital interaction. The simplification of case marking and the emergence of hybrid grammatical forms indicate that speakers prioritize communicative efficiency and expressiveness over formal accuracy. Meanwhile, creative practices such as code-mixing and morphological play serve as markers of identity and community belonging, reflecting users' negotiation between global digital culture and local linguistic heritage.

These findings resonate with the idea that social media functions as a linguistic laboratory, a space where traditional grammatical rules are reinterpreted through interaction and innovation. In the case of Bimanese, TikTok not only sustains language use among younger speakers but also fosters the development of new grammatical and stylistic norms. Rather than signaling degradation, this linguistic flexibility highlights the vitality and adaptability of regional languages in the digital age.

The findings of this study can be interpreted through three interconnected theoretical lenses that together explain the dynamics of linguistic structure and creativity in digital Bima usage. From a typological perspective, the data substantiate the notion of split alignment in Bima (Arafiq, 2020), where grammatical alignment is conditioned by discourse and pragmatic functions rather than fixed syntactic rules, as

suggested by Dixon (1994). TikTok, as a digital medium, magnifies discourse contexts that favor ergative-like alignment in narrative and emotive expressions while reinforcing nominative patterns in directive or interactive speech. From a sociolinguistic standpoint, the framework proposed by Androutsopoulos (2006) helps clarify how computer-mediated communication encourages hybrid, performance-oriented language practices. The frequent instances of code-mixing and morphological innovation observed in this study exemplify identity work rather than linguistic degradation, supporting De Matos's (2004) and Crystal's (2011) claims that such creativity constitutes the "art of common talk" in digital spaces. Finally, viewed through a phenomenological lens, as articulated by Creswell and Poth (2018), TikTok utterances can be understood as lived linguistic experiences in which speakers intentionally manipulate grammar, code, and style to convey social meaning. Collectively, these theoretical interpretations suggest that digital platforms operate as linguistic laboratories, exposing the flexible nature of typological systems and the social forces that shape them. For linguistic typology, this underscores the need to account for discourse-driven variability within alignment systems, while for sociolinguistics, it reaffirms the central role of social media in amplifying and displaying creative linguistic expression.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the case marking system and language creativity of the Bima Language as manifested in TikTok interactions, revealing how digital communication reshapes but does not replace traditional grammatical structures. The analysis demonstrated that Bima exhibits a split alignment pattern, alternating between nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive tendencies depending on discourse context and pragmatic intent. On TikTok, the nominative-accusative pattern dominates directive and interactive speech, while ergative-like constructions surface in narrative or emotionally expressive content. These findings highlight the fluid nature of alignment in actual language use, confirming that syntactic choices are influenced not only by grammatical rules but also by communicative ecology.

Beyond syntactic alignment, the study uncovered rich forms of linguistic creativity through simplification, morphological innovation, and code-mixing. These practices serve social and performative purposes, allowing speakers to construct identities, assert local pride, and engage wider audiences. In this sense, TikTok functions as a socio-linguistic stage where Bima speakers perform and negotiate their cultural identity in real time. The coexistence of traditional structures and creative adaptations underscores the language's resilience and adaptability in digital contexts. Theoretically, the study contributes to typological linguistics by offering empirical evidence that case marking in lesser-described Austronesian languages like Bima is discourse-driven and flexible rather than rigidly categorical. From a sociolinguistic perspective, the findings enrich understanding of language creativity in computer-mediated communication, supporting the idea that online discourse is a fertile ground for innovation and identity performance. Practically, this research can inform language preservation initiatives, encouraging educators and policymakers to view

digital platforms as potential spaces for sustaining regional languages rather than threats to their purity.

Nevertheless, several limitations should be acknowledged. The relatively small dataset limited to ten TikTok videos and thirty comments – may not capture the full range of variation across different communities or age groups. The lack of detailed demographic information also constrains sociolinguistic generalization. Future studies could expand the corpus, integrate mixed-method approaches such as interviews or ethnographic observation, and compare Bima's digital language with other regional languages to further explore the interplay between typology, creativity, and identity.

In conclusion, this research demonstrates that TikTok, as a contemporary communicative arena, offers valuable insights into how language evolves in real time. The Bima Language, in its digital manifestation, embodies both the continuity of grammatical tradition and the dynamism of modern creativity – affirming that linguistic systems are living, adaptive, and deeply intertwined with the social worlds in which they are used.

SUGGESTIONS

This study focused on the verbal aspects of communication. Therefore, future research could expand upon this by conducting a comparative analysis of verbal and non-verbal communication. A more in-depth study could explore how the characters' body language, facial expressions, and intonation work together with their speech acts and implicatures to create a more comprehensive understanding of meaning. Additionally, future research could apply the same pragmatic frameworks to films with different themes or genres, such as comedy or science fiction, to determine if the use of pragmatic features varies across different contexts.

The findings of this study have practical implications for EFL education in the Indonesian context. Learners are often taught grammatical rules but may lack the pragmatic competence to use English effectively in real-world social situations. To bridge this gap, teachers can use films like *The Swimmers* as authentic learning resources. By analyzing the dialogue in the film, students can be taught to identify and understand:

- Implied meaning (e.g., how to understand jokes, sarcasm, or indirect requests).
- Context-appropriate language (e.g., how to use language to express empathy, frustration, or a sense of urgency).

This approach can enhance students' awareness of the socio-cultural aspects of communication, ultimately helping them develop a more complete and effective English communicative competence.

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