

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of five subchapters, namely: background of the study, research questions, the objectives of the study, significances of the study, and scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Hate speech represents a form of language use that reflects how communication can shift from expressing opinions to exercising symbolic harm against others. As stated by Naibaho, Sinaga, and Sianipar (2024), through hostile, hatred, or discriminatin expressions, hate speech demonstrates the power of language to marginalize individuals or groups based on personal identity such as appearance, gender, sexual orientation or beliefs. Rather than functioning as offensive or rude speech, hate speech often carries social and emotional consequences, as it reinforces stigma, exclusion, and inequality in everyday interactions (Sponholz, 2023). In digital communication, such expressions frequently appear in the form of sarcastic comments, harsh evaluations, or unsolicited judgments that are normalized as personal opinions (Schmid et al., 2024). This normalization highlights the urgency of examining hate speech as a linguistic phenomenon that operates within broader social dynamics, particularly in online environments where content can easily reach many people, users can hide their identities, and interactions occur rapidly, allowing hate speech to spread and have a greater impact.

The phenomenon of hate speech has become widespread on social media, where online platforms create conditions that make hostile and discriminatory language easier to express. Schmid, Kumpel, and Rieger (2024) state that interactive features in digital environments encourage users to express precudice more freely, leading to an increase in hate speech on social media. Platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter) also support fast and interactive communication, which often mixes humor, criticism, and hostility. These platforms have shifted into a space where language is used not only to share

opinions but also to express verbal aggression (Ayeni, 2025). Murti et al. (2024) state that comments on TikTok frequently obscure hate speech in the form of humor, irony, and sarcasm, with the aim of expressing criticism, dissatisfaction, or challenging public figures. This phenomenon demonstrates how social media has become an ideal environment for the spread of hate speech in everyday digital interactions.

This widespread phenomenon can also be seen in the case of Clara Dao, a Vietnamese influencer who promotes body positivity, self-confidence, and feminism, particularly among women with small breasts like herself. She posted videos on TikTok to empower women to feel more confident about their bodies. However, some tiktok users dislike the topic she raised and tend to focus on her appearance. When Clara revealed her breast augmentation surgery in March 2025, negative responses from tiktok users increased, marked by a surge in hateful and critical comments and many users unfollowing her account. As stated by Harsiwi, Fatimah, and Fitri Alfarisy (2024), hate speech on social media is often directed at women through gender-specific attacks that reinforce traditional stereotypes and reflect broader social power imbalances. In addition, Saumer et al. (2026) explain that hate speech toward women often manifests through sexist statements, ridicule, or personal attacks that undermine women's credibility and portray them as incompetent or undeserving of public attention. The comments directed at Clara illustrate how TikTok users use language to express hostility and judge other's decisions.

Previous studies analyzed hate speech on social media from various perspectives, particularly in relation to public figure (Amalia and Nugraha (2024), politic figures (Nurfitriani, Mahmud, and Burhamzah, 2023; Nasution and Adilla, 2024), and online influencer (Astuti and Haryanto, 2023). However, these studies focus on the linguistic form of hate speech or on its social implications, without combining the analysis of both its types and underlying motives within a specific contextual event. Furthermore, although Clara Dao has been discussed as a subject of online hate, the previous study by Astuti and Haryanto (2023) analyzed the period before her breast augmentation surgery and relied on impoliteness framework. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by analyzing hate speech

directed at Clara Dao after her surgery, using the Chief of Police Circular Letter in Wiana (2019) to classify hate speech types conjunction with Steven Pinker's (2011) theory of motives to provide a more comprehensive Critical Discourse Analysis interpretation of the phenomenon.

This study aims to analyze how hate speech expressed by tiktok users in the comments on Clara Dao's TikTok posts from a Critical Discourse Analysis approach. By analyzing hate speech comments as discourse, this research seeks to examine how language is used to express hostility, construct social meanings, and reflect broader social issues surrounding Clara Dao's breast augmentation surgery and body positivity. the findings are expected to provide insight into how online discourse shapes perceptions of beauty standards and self-expression in the contemporary digital era.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study above, the problem can be formulated with the following two questions, which are:

1. What are the types of hate speech in the comments on Clara Dao's TikTok posts?
2. What are the motives of hate speech in comments on Clara Dao's TikTok posts?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the research questions above, the objectives of the study are:

1. To describe the types of hate speech in the comments on Clara Dao's TikTok posts.
2. To describe the motives of hate speech in the comments on Clara Dao's TikTok posts.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the field of linguistics, particularly Critical Discourse Analysis, by expanding the understanding of how hate speech is constructed and represented in digital communication. This study

highlights hate speech as a form of discourse that reflects broader social issues, attitudes, and values within online interactions. Therefore, this study offers new scientific insights into how TikTok users use language as a discourse that reflects social perspectives and the spread of hate speech.

Practically, this study is expected to provide a better understanding of how hate speech appears on social media, especially in TikTok comments. The findings can help readers recognize common patterns of hateful discourse used in online interactions. The results may also serve as a reference for students and researchers who are interested in studying hate speech from a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective. In addition, this study can contribute to raising public awareness of the types and underlying motives of hate speech, encouraging more critical, thoughtful, and responsible language use in digital communication.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is Critical Discourse Analysis. This study focuses on analyzing the types and motives of hate speech. The types of hate speech are categorized based on the Circular Letter of the Chief of the Indonesian National Police No. SE/06/X/2015, as cited in Wiana (2019), which include insult, denigration, defamation, unpleasant acts, provoking, inciting, and spread hoaxes. Meanwhile, the motives of hate speech are classified based on Steven Pinker (2011), which include five categories: instrumental violence, power, ideology, revenge, and sadism.

The limitation of this study lies in the data source, which focuses only on hate speech comments on Clara Dao's TikTok posts, uploaded after she revealed her breast augmentation surgery in March 2025. The selected posts are from Clara Dao's TikTok playlist entitled "👉 job" (boob job), by taking 5 posts with the most comments. The first post entitled "Part 4" with 9,496 comments, the second comment entitled "Part 3" with 7,753 comments, the third post entitled "Part 10" with 3,875 comments, the fourth post entitled "Part 6" with 3,459 comments, the fifth post entitled "Part 8" with 2,519 comments. For each post, 10 hate speech comments were taken from the top.