

## INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND NETIZEN PRESENCE AS OTHERS IN TIKTOK SOCIAL MEDIA CREATOR CONTENT MESSAGE DELIVERY

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### Abstract:

Information and communication technology development represents a significant symbol of human civilization, giving rise to two realms of interaction: the physical world and cyberspace. As reality creators, humans interact with others and objects, striving to convey messages and achieve goals. Researchers raise issues regarding individual freedom and the presence of other people in conveying messages on social media TikTok. Based on some circumstances, the researcher sees a transition in the meaning of individual freedom and the presence of other people in the context of interaction on social media TikTok. The rationale for this study is that researchers use the perspective of freedom and the presence of other people, according to Jean-Paul Sartre, which is then studied through the theory of symbolic interactionism and self-presentation theory (Erving Goffman). The paradigm used in this study is the postmodern paradigm, in which researchers attempt to deconstruct the meaning of individual freedom and the presence of other people in conveying messages on social media TikTok. The key informants in the study were two content creators of the TikTok social media who were selected purposively. Findings reveal the necessity for TikTok creators to navigate individual freedom as agreed upon by users while managing the presence of others to achieve goals such as social capital, monetization, and social transformation.

**Keywords:** Freedom, Presence of Others, TikTok

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## INTRODUCTION

Humans are creatures that can build reality through communication carried out either through communication between humans or symbols used as objects of perception. Communication between humans initially took place face-to-face. Then, in line with information and communication technology development, humans use social media to communicate. Conveying messages in this communication process cannot be denied as long as humans communicate directly or through media platforms, mainly social media TikTok. Everyone tries to convey their message so that others will receive it, and the same goes for the social media content creators of TikTok, who present the best messages so that other users like them. Researchers see several exciting things in voicing ideas or opinions on TikTok social media, including the content of TikTok social media creators whose messages are intended to entertain, inform, provide education, and express distaste for something or someone. Researchers argue that TikTok is one of the social media that creates inter-activity, in which its users have various facilities. The features provided by TikTok are diverse so that users can express themselves, interact with users, and serve as a digital playground to meet their needs for

information, communication, monetization, and entertainment. As time went on, the researchers followed a live broadcast (live) of one of the TikTok social media users, Nikita Mirzani, who received a *saweran* or lion gift (amounting to seven million rupiahs) when she said that netizens are poor and like to line up for social assistance (Chan, 2023). Based on the statement before, researchers argue that the freedom to convey messages on social media TikTok is one of the capitals to make content a source of income, and the presence of other people is not only hell but also used as a business opportunity for some content uploaders. In this era of information and communication technology development, researchers see a shift in the meaning of individual freedom and the presence of other people in conveying messages on social media, especially TikTok, with various goals that content creators have. Researchers also saw that several users uploaded other content that did not seem to consider the value of decency in conveying messages.

Content creators must prepare ideas to decorate the series of messages presented, and researchers look at this process. Therefore, researchers assume that problems on social media TikTok arise because of individual freedom in conveying messages conveying the ideas presented in the message series of content creators and consideration of the presence of other people (netizens). The researcher presents several facts that support the researcher's assumption that the problems that arise in the social media TikTok are caused by the freedom to convey the messages of the content creators. The researcher started this fact by conveying several creator content messages related to violations of the ITE Law, taken from several online news site references, which explained the reporting case was due to the way messages were delivered on TikTok social media, namely: PPNI reported the Ratu Entok program to the police on suspicion of insulting the profession of caring for his TikTok account, the NTB Regional Police enforce mandatory reports on despicable Palestinian youth on TikTok accounts, insulting the Koran via TikTok in Riau has been named a suspect, a doctor's account suspected of harassing an obstetrician' obstetrician 'TikTok,' Dr. Kevin apologizes already embarrassed by profession, and claiming that they are not afraid of the police, Jokowi's insult on social media TikTok has been arrested. Reporting on creator content that intends to entertain is also used as a reference to support researchers' assumptions, one of which is a man who dresses up like Queen of Horror Suzanna and makes his friends go into shock until they fall limp. This content has 1.2M likes, 12.5K comments, and content from other creators, causing a stir on TikTok. The online news portal reports that a newcomer singer, Zinedine Zidane, has harvested blasphemy after a parody of Andika Kangen Band singing on his TikTok account (Riandi, 2022).

Individual freedom and the presence of other people in conveying messages on social media TikTok does not only harm content creators and society but produces positive values. Based on this, the researcher presents an example of creator content that criticizes the infrastructure development of the Lampung provincial government. Bima Yudho's account voiced his criticism by freely conveying that it was reported as a violation of the ITE Law, but netizens and the Indonesian people welcomed this criticism. Tribun.com reported on the enormity of Bima's criticism of the Lampung provincial government, one of which was that the local government carried out massive road repairs. Based on this, researchers argue that individual freedom and the presence of other people in conveying messages on social media TikTok needs to be done. However, content creators must be able to think of the freedom and presence of other people as a fact that can benefit themselves and others. Researchers argue that it is necessary to deconstruct the meaning of individual freedom and the presence of other people in conveying messages on social media, especially TikTok, to sharpen the ability to live human existence among other humans who are present as active humans and freely produce text and discourse to build a much better reality. Based on this, according to Jean-Paul Sartre, the researcher focuses on the issue of individual freedom and the presence of others on social media TikTok, the perspective of freedom, and the presence of others. The issue of

individual freedom and the presence of other people is material for the study of communication science, which needs to be continuously deconstructed through scientific studies.

According to Agustinus (2011), Joy Moses developed it again. Simbolon (2020), says a journal entitled Existentialism of God Analysis of Jean-Paul's Views and Criticism Jean-Paul Sartre, says that the core of Jean-Paul Sartre's ethics, which he never wrote about, is authenticity: Humans become themselves when they dare to be authentic. Jean-Paul Jean-Paul Sartre refuses to reduce humans to concepts. Because of that, Jean-Paul Sartre sharply and grippingly writes how humans "cut off" each other in their respective efforts to maintain freedom of conveying messages and managing the presence of other people (netizens). Humans are "no" and "no" by sight. As soon as a human is seen, that human freezes as an object loses freedom and thus "is not." Humans that is the figure who faces the world and even themselves as "other."

Therefore, man is the only being whose existence precedes his essence. Simbolon said that human actions benefit the existence of his own life because humans must always be ready to exist, so humans must be aware that their existence can disappear when humans die. In realizing this existence, humans cannot do it alone or individually. Humans must have ties and find other people who will acknowledge their existence. First, other people and their presence cannot be denied. The existence of other people with their existence is a fact that cannot be avoided. The second fact is that our place or environment is a fact and a possibility. What we do in the environment depends on how we use our freedom. It is our freedom that allows us to give meaning as we wish. The third fact is the past, the past cannot be eliminated, but we can manipulate it according to our will. For Jean-Paul Sartre, the past is part of our life which does not reduce our freedom to act in our freedom but limits us in making decisions. The second fact is death. Death is the final part of existence, so freedom becomes limited with death. Based on this, researchers argue that individual freedom is always inherent in every human being to realize existence. Humans need self-existence, which researchers call an "I" that "exists" because of the presence of "you, them, or you," which in this case is someone else. The researcher argues that other people's existence determines human beings' existence. The presence of other people is a form of affirmation of the authentic quality of human existence through their freedom. Researchers argue that the individual freedom of content creators and the presence of other people (netizens) determines the quality of self-existence. Therefore social media content creators TikTok must be responsible for their freedom in conveying messages and for the presence of other people (netizens) as supporters – the quality of existence.

Based on the explanation above, this study aims to investigate and understand the meaning of individual freedom and the presence of other people in conveying messages on the social media platform TikTok.

## METHODS

Qualitative research studies individual freedom in conveying messages and other people's (netizens) presence on social media TikTok. The method used in this study is the phenomenological method. The researcher explores the experiences that are realized by the research subjects in interpreting individual freedom in conveying messages and the presence of other people (netizens) in their TikTok social media accounts. The researcher uses a postmodern paradigm in this study because the researcher combines two theoretical perspectives in seeing reality, namely the theory of the postmodern tradition and the sociopsychological tradition. The postmodern theory that is used as a basis for researchers' thoughts in building research ontologies is the existentialist philosophy of Jean-Paul Satre. In discussing research results, Jean-Paul Sartre's thoughts about freedom and other people in this study are complemented by theories in the sociopsychological tradition, Symbolic Interactionism (Mead, 1982), and Self Presentation theory (Goffman, 1959). The subjects in this study

were two content creators on TikTok social media who were selected purposively, that is, parody content, having experience uploading message content through their creativity for three years. The research subjects have many followers, their content is controversial or unique, they are over 17 years old, and they monetize through endorsements. The data were obtained from interviews with two research subjects who had been selected purposively.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research questions two things: (1) How is individual freedom in conveying messages and the presence of other people (netizens) according to the content of TikTok social media creators?; and (2) How is the understanding of individual freedom in conveying messages and the presence of other people (netizens) proportionately respecting the autonomy of individual freedom of TikTok social media content creators?

Based on the discussion of research data for the first research question regarding individual freedom in conveying messages, the findings in this study are that the freedom of conveying messages possessed by the key informants is expressed through the freedom to choose objects and places to create content, respond to other content creators, provide criticism, and choose words that are packaged in such a way as to be accepted by viewers or netizens, as well as crucial informants have the freedom to choose how to free themselves from the regulation of social media TikTok. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher argues that freedom of conveying messages is one of the key informants' efforts to achieve the goal of interacting on social media TikTok, one of which is creating social capital and monetization. The key informants' ability to deal with facticities is an effort to present themselves to human existence in *etre pour soi* mode. Sartre in Richmond (2020), says I recognize myself as others see me. It is not in question. However, there is no need to compare whether "I am" for "myself" and whether "I am" for "others." Provided "I" can find "myself" as being for "self," then this is equivalent to what "I am" being for the "other". The researcher argues that the presence of other people (netizens) is an arena for critical informants to have the existence of *etre pour soi* (being for itself) mode as long as the freedom to convey the message can be achieved. Researchers argue that the freedom expected by Jean-Paul Sartre is human freedom to choose the right way to determine self-existence, how humans free themselves from the obstacles that imprison their freedom. Humans will always be cursed with freedom because humans must always be accessible in choosing and responsible for their choices. Based on the research findings and the concept of freedom offered by Jean-Paul Sartre, the researcher argues that the freedom to convey a message is one of the human efforts in choosing the style of communication that will be displayed, self-presence as *etre pour soi* is a struggle to show the freedom to choose the communication message that is displayed. It will be delivered. Erving Goffman in Rulli (2014), says that individuals construct themselves by presenting themselves (self-performance). However, this self-appearance is formed to meet the audience's or social environment's needs, not originates from oneself, and is not created by himself to fulfill the need for social recognition. Researchers argue that the definition of communication does not stop at the process of conveying and interpreting messages. However, to produce communication actions, it is necessary to have a definition of communication affixed by negotiating the freedom of conveying messages carried out by communicators and communicants to achieve the goal of acting. The delivery of messages to crucial informants on social media TikTok is carried out consciously, knowingly, and willingly for the presence of consequences, so the researcher argues that communication actions related to individual freedom in conveying messages must have an awareness of the presence of other things that are in and outside himself. Researchers saw several facts that accompanied the key informants when communicating, namely realizing their freedom in conveying messages on the TikTok social media followed by responsibility. Based on the

results of these interviews, the researcher believes that the key informants are trying to create individual freedom in conveying messages without eliminating the facts surrounding them, especially the presence of other people (netizens, children, wives, and lovers). Sartre (2007) says the first effect of existentialism is that it puts every man in possession of himself as he is and places the entire responsibility for his existence squarely upon his shoulders. Furthermore, when we say that a man is responsible for himself, we do not mean that he is responsible only for his individuality but that he is responsible for all men. Based on this, researchers argue that human freedom in conveying messages is associated with a responsibility for everything inside or outside of him.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher saw that the key informants in this study succeeded in presenting themselves as *etre pour soi* (being for it-self) by managing the facticities surrounding them during interactions on social media TikTok. Researchers argue that the definition of communication does not stop at the process of conveying and interpreting messages. However, to produce communication actions, it is necessary to have a definition of communication affixed by negotiating individual freedom in conveying messages carried out by communicators and communicants to achieve the goal of acting. Based on the results of research on the presence of other people (netizens) on TikTok social media, researchers see that the presence of other people (netizens) is a fact that is expected by crucial informants, without the presence of other people (netizens), key informants cannot support their existence in the media social media on TikTok, the presence of other people (netizens) for key informants is used to confirm himself as a person who represents the views and feelings of other people. Key informants make other people a measure of the success of individual freedom in conveying messages, and researchers see that the presence of other people (netizens) is a source of truth for the existence of "I" for other "I." Research data regarding the negative presence of other people (netizens), key informant 1 (Makjeddor) prefers to apologize, block, and be used as a joke; key informant 2 (Erick Berebet) responded casually, using negative comments as material for creating new content and creating more innovative content, this can be seen from the results of the interview: Gradually I create content that is different from the others, FYP., which is not typical in fact so that the haters get too hot." Researchers argue that the ability of crucial informants to manage this negative facticity is a picture of victory over the freedom to convey messages on social media TikTok. The presence of other people (netizens) as a negative facticity aroused the enthusiasm of the key informants to become more viral content creators. In Richmond (2020), Jean-Paul Sartre says I recognize myself as others see me. It is not in question. However, there is no need to compare whether "I am" for "myself" and "whether "I am" for "others," provided "I" can find "myself" as being for "self," so that is equivalent to what "I am" being for the other). The researcher argues that the presence of other people (netizens) is an arena for critical informants to have the existence of *etre pour soi* (being for itself) mode as long as individual freedom in conveying the message can be adequately managed.

Research data to answer the second research question regarding the proportionality of individual freedom in conveying messages on social media TikTok to respect the autonomy of other people's freedom present in the content shows that key informants have different communication styles. Based on the research results, the researcher saw that manners, norms, and manners must accompany the freedom to convey messages carried out by these key informants. It follows the statement of Sartre (2007), which says that every human being has the freedom to choose for himself and others. All actions are intended to create himself. According to his wishes, other people affirm the value of the quality of what is believed in his choice. Based on this, the researcher argues that key informants manage individual freedom in conveying their messages with several rules that are used as principles. Norms, manners, and manners are a form of responsibility for individual freedom in conveying messages related to the best choice for themselves and others. The thesis

statement proposed by the researcher can be actualized based on research results that every individual has absolute freedom to choose who and how he or she is, but in the context of communication, this individual freedom must be accompanied by norms that apply to others. This norm is one of the facts that surround every individual in communicating, but to be an individual who is present in *etre pour soi* or being for it-self mode, an individual must be able to think creatively in acting freely without violating the prevailing norms. Norms as a facticity are appropriately managed to realize individual freedom in conveying messages on social media TikTok.

Based on this, the researcher argues that individual freedom in conveying messages supports the existence created by key informants. The management of individual freedom in conveying messages is a manifestation of thought on awareness in building a positive impression from the audience, in which the critical informant is not only responsible for wanting to show himself but also for creating the impression presented by the audience. The researcher assumes that the awareness of creating a dialogic meaning of freedom is the beginning of the reflective awareness of TikTok social media content creators to create themselves that exist as *etre pour soi* or being for itself and being for the Other. Freedom is an action in which individuals try to break away from *etre on soi* or being in itself, which is not passive because it takes action but is trapped in facticity, so individual freedom in conveying messages can be defined as an act of self-change through individual efforts in managing facticity, the individual is present as *etre pour soi* or being for itself, as well as being for others. The key informants try to become individuals who exist as *etre pour soi* or being for themselves and others by managing their freedom in conveying messages, and this can be seen from the principles of crucial informants when conveying messages on social media TikTok. This revolutionary act of communication involves individual efforts to present individual freedom in conveying messages, and netizens on social media TikTok agree upon this. In this case, researchers argue that the convenience of communicating on social media TikTok occurs when there is an agreement to implement individual freedom in conveying messages through the lens of key informants on the values possessed by netizens.

Individual freedom in conveying messages to communicators, especially key informants as content creators, must be agreed upon by the presence of other people, in this case, netizens. Based on the research results, the key informants interpret the presence of other people (netizens) as supporters of uploaded content. Researchers argue that individuals cannot escape the presence of other people (netizens) and their responsibility for the freedom to choose to be present as individuals expected by themselves and others. According to Mead (1982), we understand stimulus as an opportunity or opportunity for action, not as coercion or mandate. It can be seen from the research results that the key informants used the presence of netizens to support their content. Key informants use the presence of netizens to generate additional income as content creators. It requires high creativity in thinking about carrying out communication actions without losing their freedom to convey messages and the presence of other people (netizens) on social media TikTok. In line with the study of self-existence created by crucial informants through the content presented on the social media TikTok, researchers examine this self-existence from Mead's point of view. The important thing about "communication" is that communication provides a form of behavior in which an organism or individual can become an object unto itself. A person responds to what he directs to others and where his response becomes part of his behavior, where he hears himself and responds to himself, speaks and answers himself as others answer himself. That is what it means that we have behavior in which individuals become objects for themselves. Based on this presentation, the researcher saw that the key informants communicated content that was expected to get a response from the audience to create the communication space meant by Mead mentioned above. When individuals can communicate and convey messages accurately, they become both the subject and

object in responding to their existence. Researchers see that self-existence in the context of communication on social media TikTok is an act of communication through the freedom of conveying messages that are adapted to the values possessed by others, individuals in creating space for the social process make themselves subjects and objects for themselves which then respond the audience is the main supporting factor for self-creation and affirms self-existence as *etre pour soi* or being for itself on social media TikTok. In Ritzer (2012), Mead says we know "I" only after the action is carried out. We know me only in our memories; therefore, each personality is a mixture of "I" and "I"; "I" allows change in society, while "self" enables individuals to live comfortably in the social world. Based on this, the researcher argues that Mead is in harmony with Jean-Paul Sartre's thoughts regarding human existence, which is in the mode of existence *etre pour soi* or being for itself.

The researcher examines the aspects of society proposed by Mead in Ritzer (2012), as a continuous social process that precedes both the mind and the self. Society is described as a set of ordered responses taken over by individuals in the form of "me." The researcher argues that the freedom of conveying messages in communication requires intersubjectivity from society in which there are "I" and "myself" as a bridge to build mutual understanding. The essence of communication is the perception and meaning created through interaction, which then the individuals involved in the interaction seek to equalize perceptions. Mutual understanding can be realized through agreement on differences in how each individual conveys messages. The researcher examines the concept of freedom to convey messages and the meaning of the presence of other people (netizens), which is one of the supporting aspects in achieving this mutual understanding. Researchers argue that the concept of freedom to convey messages and the meaning of the presence of other people (netizens) must be agreed upon by each individual who communicates to realize a common understanding. The discussion regarding individual freedom in conveying messages and the meaning of the presence of other people (netizens) seen from the point of view of the key informants, Jean-Paul Sartre's thoughts and the proportional value of the two perspectives, shows that there is a need for a definition of communication from experts accompanied by individual freedom deliver messages, as well as the presence of other people (netizens).

The results of data analysis in this study indicate that individual freedom in conveying messages must be understood as an individual effort to develop oneself through a thought process in presenting "I" in another "I." It shows that communication is an act of creating a response. Individual freedom in conveying the message must have collided with universal truth, namely through an agreement between "I," "myself," and the presence of other people (netizens). To create self-existence in *etre pour soi* or being for it-self mode, individuals cannot escape from the presence of other people (netizens), and to achieve this mode, individuals must be accessible. Individual freedom in conveying messages on social media TikTok must strive to be agreed upon by others. If creator content functions "me" and "me" and "thoughts" correctly, then social media creator content on TikTok is present as *etre pour soi* or being for itself. The researcher argues that individual freedom in conveying messages must be included in the definition of communication because, through individual freedom in conveying messages, communicators try to adapt themselves to each other to realize a change through mutual understanding. The presence of other people (netizens) is a manifestation of individual thoughts in creating a space for communication, as well as a meeting place between "I," "myself," and the freedom to convey messages so that individuals can be investigated in the mode of existence *etre pour soi* or being for itself and being for other. , as a human being who can choose the responsibilities that will be undertaken. The researcher argues that the definition of communication in the context of interaction on social media is not only a process of conveying messages but an act of communication that involves efforts to accept individual freedom in conveying messages to create unconditional information through the presence of other people

(netizens) as a fact that must be utilized to create the existence of *etre pour soi* or being for itself and being for the other, such is the act of productive communication. Any source is "me," and "me" has principles that must apply to others. It is intended to exist in the *etre pour soi* mode that key informants raise through other people's responses regarding their freedom to convey messages on the TikTok social media account.

Research on individual freedom in conveying messages and the presence of other people (netizens) in the context of interactions on social media discusses freedom agreed upon by others, self-ability to create communication space is a process of adaptation between self and others. Self is challenged to become an individual present as *etre pour soi* or to be for itself and to be for the other through responsibility. Responsibility for the presence of other people (netizens) as intersubjectivity gives rise to individual abilities in creating freedom of conveying messages. Then responsible freedom is a form of intentional communication to present individuals as human existence. Based on this, the researcher proposes a new definition of communication. Communication requires individual freedom in conveying messages to emphasize individual existence in a dialogic response space. Freedom itself is a manifestation of one's ability to manage the facts that surround it. Communicators are active as interpreters of messages in this productive mode of communication definition, and the researcher argues that it is through the freedom to convey messages that communication emerges as a process of creating shared understanding. Mutual understanding in communication is the main goal that communicators must pursue, especially in the context of interactions on social media. Jean-Paul Sartre did not discuss social media, but researchers tried to draw on Jean-Paul Sartre's thoughts in adding the concept of individual freedom and the presence of other people (netizens) to the definition of communication in the context of conveying messages, especially on social media TikTok.

## CONCLUSION

The freedom to convey messages carried out by critical informants to present existence in *etre pour soi* mode is shown by key informants through their ability to manage the facts that surround them, as well as creativity that is built to create mutually agreed freedom, namely between content creators and netizens, this is following Sartre's thinking. The presence of other people (netizens) is interpreted as a measuring tool for key informants in realizing that they are present as *etre pour soi* through efforts to uphold freedom of conveying messages in their content on social media TikTok. Intersubjectivity carried out by the key informants can be seen from the openness of the key informants to open a dialogic space between themselves and netizens. It is supported by George H. Mead's thinking in symbolic interactionism.

The freedom to convey a message that the content creator interprets as the vital informant of this research is freedom of expression that has norms and etiquette and considers the choice of words to present, and this is related to freedom of conveying messages accompanied by responsibility. The results of the study show that the proportionality of the meaning of freedom of conveying messages is seen from the shared understanding created by crucial informants and netizens, as the results of the research show that freedom of conveying messages proportionally is accompanied by responsibility for oneself and the presence of other people (netizens). It is in line with Sartre's thinking. Efforts to maintain the freedom of conveying messages carried out by crucial informants will not be separated from his ability to manage the facts that are always there. Thus, this freedom must be agreed upon by netizens so that the presence of netizens is an arena for forming "I" in "I." the other is for content creators. Based on this, the researcher argues that the key informant's ability to adopt the freedom of conveying his message is to present himself as *etre pour soi*.

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