



The Communication Style of Influencers in Building Interaction With Followers *@Thifalislami*

Luhur Iran Pangestu¹, Siti Khumayah², Welly Wihayati³

Swadaya Gunung Jati University, Cirebon, West Java, Indonesia. Email: luhur.122100003@ugj.ac.id

Swadaya Gunung Jati University, Cirebon, West Java, Indonesia. Email:

siti.khumayah@ugj.ac.id

Communication Sciences Study Program, Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati

Email: welly.wihayati@ugj.ac.id

Corresponding Author. Email: welly.wihayati@ugj.ac.id

Abstract

Background. Advances in communication technology have propelled social media into a primary space for information exchange and the formation of digital relationships. In this context, influencers play a strategic role in fostering interactions with their audience through communication patterns on Instagram. This study stems from the scarcity of research that specifically examines the communication styles of micro-influencers, particularly in their efforts to create sustainable interactions with followers.

Aims. This study aims to examine communication styles and interaction forms, and to identify the most prominent communication style on the Instagram account *@thifalislami*.

Methods. The method used is a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques including in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation. Informants were selected through purposive sampling, involving the influencer as the primary informant and several followers as supporting informants. Data analysis was conducted using an interactive model encompassing data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

Result. The results of the study indicate that influencers employ communication styles that are friendly, open, relaxed, expressive, and animated, with the “open” style being the most dominant.

Conclusion. Interactions are built through posted content, captions, comment sections, and the “Story” feature, which helps foster authentic and sustained relationships with followers.

Keywords: communication style; influencer; interaction; Instagram; followers.



© 2026 The Author(s). This article is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source.

INTRODUCTION

Advances in communication technology have brought about many changes in the way people interact and share information. One such development is the rise of social media, which has become the primary platform for people to communicate, share information, and build social connections digitally. According to (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) Social media is a collection of internet-based applications that enable users to share and create content. Through social media, people not only receive information but can also become sources of information that influence others.

One phenomenon that has emerged from the rise of social media is the rise of influencers, individuals who can influence the choices, behavior, and decisions of their followers online. According to (Freberg et al., 2011) an influencer is someone who has high credibility on social media, can shape public opinion, and can influence their followers to play a crucial role in effectively communicating messages to their audience, whether through their delivery style, interactions, or consistency in content creation. Several previous studies have examined influencers' communication style and their impact on audiences.

Some previous studies relevant to this topic include the following: (Astawa, 2022), titled “The Communication Style of Instagram Influencer @ayuguns in Product Endorsements on Social Media” examines the influencer’s communication style using Norton’s communication style theory and focuses on the context of product promotion or endorsement on Instagram. The study (Febriana, 2025), titled “Analysis of Influencer Vania Winola’s Online Communication Style Through Her TikTok Account @vania”, applies The Controlling Style and Equalitarian Style Theories, focusing on social relationships and emotional closeness on the TikTok platform. Meanwhile, the study (Hanaya, 2024), titled “The Role of Endorsers @ndshvv and @fuziyah_alya in Promoting Camille Beauty on Social Media”, this study focuses on the role and characteristics of endorsers in the effectiveness of product promotion without employing a specific communication style theory framework. There is a significant research gap between these three studies and the present study.

The study stands out by consistently applying Norton’s communication style theory as its primary analytical framework, aimed not at examining the effectiveness of promotions, but at understanding how communication styles play a role in fostering authentic interactions. First, from a theoretical perspective, the study (Astawa, 2022) draws on Norton’s theory and applies it to product promotion. The study (Febriana, 2025) used different communication style theories, namely the Controlling and Equalitarian Style, whereas the study (Hanaya, 2024) does not utilize communication style theory at all but instead focuses on the role of the endorser.

Second, in terms of research focus, the three previous studies tended to treat communication style as a marketing tool or image shaper across various platforms, Instagram and TikTok, whereas this study specifically focuses on the process of digital interaction between micro influencers and their followers on the Instagram platform, without an emphasis on product promotion. None of these three studies has yet conducted an in-depth examination of micro-influencers. Yet micro influencers also play a crucial role in shaping digital communication patterns within their communities. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by analyzing the Instagram account *@thifalislami* as a representative of a micro influencer. One creator from Cirebon City, West Java. As of October 2025, Thifal Islami's Instagram account had 17,100 followers with an engagement rate of 2,8% (Instagram data *@thifalsilami*, 2025). However, to date, the dominant communication style used by Thifal Islami as a micro-influencer has not been clearly mapped out, including which aspects of communication play the most prominent role in Instagram interactions, which is why many people are interested in following her Instagram account.

Based on this background, this study aims to identify the communication style used by Thifal Islami to build interactions with followers on the Instagram account *@thifalislami*. Additionally, this will be achieved through an analysis of interaction patterns observed in the comments section and captions. This study is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of how a micro-influencer builds authentic engagement and emotional closeness with their followers through content published on Instagram.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research on influencer communication style aims to draw comparisons and provide new insights for future research. The following are previous studies relevant to the topic under investigation. The first study, titled "The Communication Style of Instagram Influencer *@ayuguns* in Product Endorsement on Social Media," shows that an influencer's communication style is crucial in capturing the attention of followers and enhancing the effectiveness of advertisements on Instagram. In the study, *@ayuguns* employed several communication styles, including open, impression leaving, animated, expressive, and friendly, and appeared more trustworthy to her followers. Additionally, the variety of communication styles employed helped significantly increase the number of followers.

The second study, conducted by (Febriana, 2025), titled "Analysis of Influencer Vania Winola's Online Communication Style Through Her TikTok Account *@vania*", shows that

Vania employs two primary communication styles, the Controlling Style and the Equalitarian Style. Vania uses a persuasive and inspirational approach to influence her audience. She does this by building her followers' interest and loyalty and fostering positive, meaningful relationships on TikTok.

The third study, titled “The Role of @ndshvv and @fuziah_alya’s Endorsement in Promoting Camille Beauty on Social Media,” by (Hanaya, 2024) It emphasizes that a product’s success on social media is largely determined by the characteristics and role of each endorser. A study of two types of endorsers, celebrity endorsers and everyday person endorsers, reveals that while they play different roles, they complement each other in influencing the audience. Endorsers with high levels of popularity, such as @ndshvv, play a crucial role in boosting brand awareness and capturing public attention through their strong personal image and credibility. Conversely, the endorser @fuziah_alya, who represents an ordinary user, can build consumer trust through communication that is more relatable to the audience.

All three studies share a common theme: They emphasize how influencers’ communication style on social media influences their audience and helps build rapport and trust with their followers. However, the three studies focus on different contexts. The studies (Astawa, 2022), focus more on product promotion through persuasive communication on Instagram, research (Febriana, 2025) emphasize social connections and emotional closeness on TikTok through engaging and inspiring communication, while researching (Hanaya, 2024), focuses on the characteristics of communication style, as well as the role of influencers in the effectiveness of promotions and the appeal of products on social media.

The findings of three previous studies align with this study, titled “Influencers’ Communication Style in Building Interactions with Followers @thifalislami”. There is a similarity in the display of a comparable communication style in social media activities, though with a different focus, not on product promotion, but on building interactions to foster closeness with followers through a planned and interactive communication approach, such as replying to comments and the use of words in captions for video or photo posts when reviewing a location.

This study has significant academic and practical value because it addresses a gap in previous research, which has tended to focus on influencers’ communication styles in the context of product promotion. As such, this study is expected to contribute to the development of communication style theory in the realm of social media and serve as a practical guide for influencers in managing digital interactions.

Social Media: Instagram

According to (Setiadi, 2016) Social media is defined as a platform that focuses on users' presence and facilitates various forms of activity and collaboration in the online space. Thus, social media can be understood as an internet-based medium that enables users to interact, participate, and collaborate virtually.

According to (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) Social media is defined as a collection of internet-based applications that enable the creation and sharing of user-generated content. Social media supports interactive two-way communication, where users not only receive information but also actively participate in the communication process. Social media platforms like Instagram provide an interactive digital space that facilitates two-way communication between users and their audiences, or between influencers and their followers. In this context, a social media influencer is someone who influences the views, attitudes, and behaviors of their followers through the content they create and the interactions they foster. According to (Wihayati, 2017) Celebrity marketing is a strategy that closely ties brands to celebrities or influencers who serve as brand ambassadors. It involves how manufacturers leverage these celebrities or influencers to boost sales, such as through collaborations with celebrities over a specific period, as well as how companies evaluate the effectiveness of using celebrities in social media advertisements and the impact these celebrities have on business and marketing.

Meanwhile, according to (Freberg et al., 2011) A social media influencer is someone who possesses the credibility and ability to influence public opinion through authenticity and a close relationship with their audience or followers. As an influencer, Thifal Islami leverages interactive features on Instagram, such as the comments section, captions, and reels, to build a close relationship with her followers. Through a deliberate and responsive communication style, Thifal Islami not only conveys a message but also fosters the development of authentic interpersonal relationships.

Influencer

According to (Bruns, 2018), social media influencers are individuals who are regarded as opinion leaders on specific digital platforms, particularly in areas of public interest such as beauty, food, lifestyle, and fashion. In line with this (holiencinova), points out that influencers who are active on social media tend to have more authentic and interactive relationships with their followers. Influencers can also be defined as social media users who have a large number of followers, enjoy a high level of trust from the public and are able to disseminate information

widely and quickly. Every piece of content they publish has the potential to reach many other users in a short period of time (Herviani, V., Hadi, 2020).

Communication Style

According to Norton in (Allen, C. dan Cutlip, 2006), it's explained that communication style refers to the way a person interacts verbally and nonverbally with the aim of conveying signals so that a desired outcome can be achieved and understood. In the communication process, the manner in which a message is conveyed often plays a more decisive role than the content of the message it self. There are many individuals who actually have a good grasp of the subject matter, yet the message they wish to convey fails to be understood or accepted by others due to limitations in their delivery technique. Therefore, the application of an appropriate communication style is a crucial aspect in building effective communication.

According to (Allen, C. dan Cutlip, 2006), There are several aspect of communication style, namely:

- a) Dominant: A dominant communicator in interaction. People like this tend to want to control the conversation.
- b) Dramatic: Tends to be overly expressive when communicating, using figurative language, metaphors, stories, fantasy, and wordplay.
- c) Animated and Expressive: Using nonverbal cues in communication, such as eye contact, facial expressions, gesture, and body language.
- d) Open: The communicator is open and transparent, with no secrets, which fosters self confidence and promotes two way communication.
- e) Argumentativ: Communicators tend to enjoy arguing and can be aggressive in their arguments.
- f) Relaxed: Communicators are able to maintain a positive attitude and be supportive of others.
- g) Attentive: Communicators interact with others by being active listeners, empathic, and audience.
- h) Making an Impression: A communicators ability to leave an impression on their audience.
- i) Friendly: The communicator is friendly and polite when conveying a message to the recipient.
- j) Precise: A style in which the speaker ensures that the content of the spoken communication is precise and accurate.

METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach to understand the meanings, processes, and interpretations underlying the phenomenon under study, namely, "The Luhur Iran Pangestu
DOI 10.62885/polisci.v3i6.1210

Communication Style of Influencers in Building Interactions with Followers *@thifalislami*". The study focuses on the communication style employed by the influencer Thifal Islami. The analysis focused on the forms of communication in the content on the *@thifalislami* Instagram account, including captions, reels, and interaction patterns in the comments section, with the aim of fostering a sense of closeness with followers and the audience.

To collect comprehensive data for this study, the research employed three main techniques. First, in-depth interviews were used to explore the perspectives of the informant group: interviews were chosen for their ability to elicit detailed and subjective information from sources, thereby allowing the researcher to uncover the underlying meaning of the communication phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2017). Both non-participant observations directly examined the communication style evident in the comments section. This technique is useful for documenting behavior and interactions in a natural setting without direct involvement. (Moleong, 2021). Third, documentation for collecting secondary and historical data, such as screenshots of the content being analyzed and follower growth. The data from this documentation serves to supplement and corroborate the primary data obtained from interviews and observations, (Arikunto, 2019). The research subjects were informants selected through purposive sampling, a method based on the researcher's specific criteria to obtain relevant information. (Sugiyono, 2017). The research subjects were divided into two categories of informants. First, the key informant was Thifal Islami himself, an influencer who would provide data on communication intentions and strategies, as well as the history of his career on social media. The second category consists of supporting informants, namely 3-5 followers of the Instagram account *@thifalislami*. Selected based on criteria of activity and duration of following the account, with the aim of gaining perspectives on the perceived sense of closeness

The validity of the data is ensured through triangulation techniques, including source triangulation (comparing data from the primary subject with supporting sources) and methodological triangulation (cross-checking interview findings with observations). In addition, careful observation is conducted to identify consistent and credible communication patterns.

Data analysis is performed interactively using a model (Saldana, 2014). The process begins with data condensation, which involves selecting, summarizing, and coding the raw data to align with Norton's dimensions. The condensed data is then presented through data presentation (matrices or systematic narratives). The final stage involves drawing conclusions

and verification, where final conclusions are drawn based on the identified pattern and reverified using the principle of triangulation.

DISCUSSION

Thifal Islami, commonly known as Thifal, a woman from Cirebon, was born on February 24, 1996, and began her career as an Instagram influencer in 2018 with an initial following of 3.000 followers. By 2026, her total following had reached 18,000, with 1,001 posts and an average annual follower growth of 1,875. The Instagram profile *@thifalislami* exhibits the characteristics of a micro-influencer. Thifal Islami positions herself as a digital creator focused on visual storytelling about places and brands, and on sharing moments of daily life through authentic content.

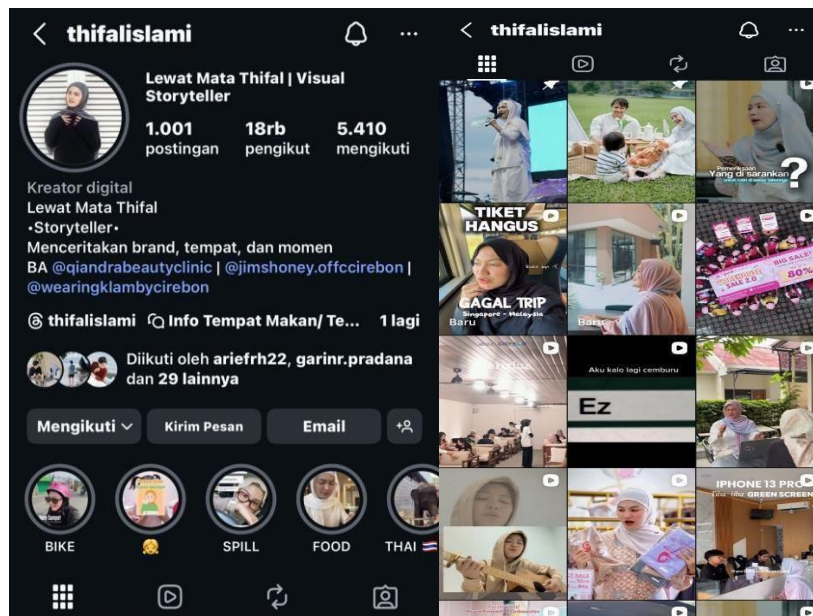


Figure 1: Instagram Profile of Influencer *@thifalislami*.
Source: Instagram *@thifalislami* (Accessed in February 2026).

The study identifies the communication style used by Thifal Islami, a micro-influencer, to build close relationships with followers on Instagram. Though in dept interviews with the primary informant. Thifal Islami, as well as additional informants comprising three highly active followers, combined with systematic observation of the variety of content published on the Instagram account *@thifalislami*, this study yielded several significant findings regarding the characteristics of the communication style employed, the forms of interaction developed, and the most prominent communication patterns in fostering engagement with followers. The

research findings indicate that Thifal Islami's success in developing high-quality interactions with followers doesn't entirely depend on the authentic communication approach and a willingness to engage personally with his audience. These findings will be explained in detail with reference to the two formulated research questions: first, the characteristics of the communication style applied; and second, the form of interaction developed.

The Communication Style Used by Thifal Islami on the Instagram Account @*thifalislami*

Based on findings from interviews and observations of content on the @*thifalislami* Instagram account, this study identified that Thifal Islami employs five communication styles when interacting with followers. According to Zain Malik, a follower of the @*thifalislami* account for two years, Thifal Islami has a friendly, polite, and down-to-earth attitude. He appears humble and approachable when interacting with his followers. He also noted that Thifal Islami's language style is very natural, relaxed, and familiar and easy to understand. In line with this, Ilham Ibradinov, who has also followed the account for two years, added that Thifal Islami is very expressive and doesn't hesitate to show his emotions in line with what he's reviewing or feeling, and is honest in giving his opinions. He also emphasized that his language isn't convoluted, is very approachable, and is up to date. Meanwhile, Anna, a follower of the @*thifalislami* account for five years, noted that Thifal Islami has a humble and cheerful attitude toward her followers, especially when interacting with and responding to comments. In her view, Thifal Islami's cheerful delivery is a unique draw, and her communication style has a distinctive flair that makes her eager to watch every piece of content posted.

Based on observations and feedback from followers, the five communication styles in question are friendly, an expressive, relaxed, an open, and an animated. Each of these communication styles is consistently evident across various types of uploaded content, whether in the form of captions, videos, reels, or during interactions in the comments section. This finding indicates that Thifal Islami employs a multidimensional communication style, in which each dimension serves a distinct function in fostering effective interactions and building connections with followers. This combination of communication style establishes Thifal Islami as an influencer with a distinctive, easily recognizable communication style among their followers or audience.

The uniqueness and consistency in the application of these five communication styles yielded significant findings in this study. Of the five communication styles used by Thifal Islami, this study found that the open communication style is the most dominant in fostering

interaction with followers on the *@thifalislami* account. The dominance of this open communication style is evident in followers' perceptions, who consistently convey that Thifal Islami is a very open, genuine, and authentic figure across this content and interactions. Followers feel that Thifa Islami doesn't create rigid barriers between himself as an influencer and his followers, but rather fosters an equal and authentic relationship.

The open communication style is the most dominant because it serves as the foundation for the other four communication styles and lends authenticity to every form of interaction. Without openness, friendliness can seem superficial, expressiveness can appear forced, a casual style may be seen as unprofessional, and an animated style can come across as over-the-top acting. However, with an open communication style, all other dimensions of communication gain an authenticity that makes followers truly trust and feel emotionally connected. This dominance of openness is also reflected in an engagement rate of 2.8% among 17.100 followers, indicating that the interactions built are high-quality and genuine, not merely numbers.

The Types of Interaction Thifal Islami Builds with Its Followers Through Instagram Content

Research findings indicate that Thifal Islami's interactions are primarily indirect, taking the form of captions, reels, and replies to comments on upload posts. Each of these interaction forms has its own distinct characteristics and plays a unique role in fostering closeness with followers. Interactions via captions and reels serve as a gateway to communication that invites responses, while interactions in the comments section provide a platform for public dialogue involving many followers simultaneously. These three forms of interaction are interconnected in building a comprehensive relationship between the influencer and their followers. Research shows that Thifal Islami consistently engages and responds across all forms of interaction, rather than focusing solely on one or two specific forms. This approach fosters diverse ways of interacting that strengthen followers' closeness and loyalty to the *@thifalislami* account.

The following is an example of the interaction between Thifal Islami and its followers through the comment section on its Instagram posts



Figure 2: Thifal Islami's Interaction with Followers on Coffee Shop Review Content.

Source: Instagram Account @thifalislami.

First, in the image above, you can see an interaction between a follower named @ilhmdnv and a review post about Kalcer Coffee Shop in Cirebon. @ilhmdnv asked for a recommendation for a favorite menu item, Thifal Islami responded with the answer “there’s Javanese fried noodles and blueberry milk coffee for the drink!”. Explaining why that menu item is his favorite, along with the use of emojis to reinforce his reasoning. From the interaction between Thifal Islami and their follower, in an open, friendly, and precise manner, using casual, familiar language that is not overly formal yet informative, with emojis and visual expressions, creating a communicative and warm impression. This fosters a sense of closeness and warmth in their interaction with followers.



Figure 3: Thifal Islami's Interaction with Followers on Gym Activity Content.

Source: Instagram Account @thifalislami.

The second interaction shows Thifal Islami's response to a compliment from follower @mzain40 regarding a post about gym activities. Thifal responds to the praise with the statement, "Really? Is that true?" This style of communication creates a friendly, relaxed atmosphere with a touch of attentiveness. The influencer doesn't position themselves above their followers but instead builds a relationship based on mutual respect. This is evident in the language used to reply to followers' comments, which demonstrates an interaction that is intimate, responsive, and casual.



Figure 4: Thifal Islami's Interaction with Followers on Living Plaza Cirebon Culinary Festival.

Source: Instagram Account @thifalislami.

The third interaction, on @thifalislami's Instagram post featuring the Living Plaza Cirebon Culinary Festival, shows an exchange between @annawinataaa, who commented, "That's my favorite drink too," and Thifal Islami, who replied, "It's simply the best!" From the way Thifal Islami builds interaction through brief expressions in replies in the comments section, the words used by Thifal Islami convey a friendly, dramatic communication style. By using brief, familiar expressions that are hyperbolic and full of praise to create a sense of closeness, the interaction fosters a warm, positive, and inclusive atmosphere. This communication style fosters emotional closeness and strengthens the bond between the influencer and their followers through interactions in the comments section.



Figure.5: The Choice of Fonts Used in The Video and The Caption Text in The Reels Post Reviewing a Fashion Spot in Cirebon.
Source: Instagram Account @thifalislami.

Fourth interaction: As a micro-influencer, Thifal Islami has 18,300 followers. Thifal Islami can influence her followers to visit, purchase, and adopt fashion trends. When communicating with her followers, Thifal Islami often uses specific fonts or phrases in her video reels and captions. As seen in the video text, the phrase “Korean Fashion in Cirebon” uses the Noto Serif font; it is typically used for branding or headlines because it looks elegant, formal, and classic. The font choice in the first image reflects an expressive communication style, as it highlights visual elements to reinforce the message. The second image shows the caption text providing detailed information about the review in the video reel. The caption includes several words and phrases, such as “I won’t spill the beans,” “bestie,” “don’t blame me, okay,” and “it still makes perfect sense,” along with several emojis.

The use of such words and language creates a warm, informal tone while remaining informative. According to Norton’s communication style theory, the captions and language style fall under the open, friendly, and precise communications style. This demonstrates that Thifal Islami consistently innovates with Instagram content ideas to capture the audience’s interest and maintain good relationships with its followers.



Figure.6: Interactions Between The Influencer and Followers in The Comments Section of The Review Post For The Restaurant “Sambel Dadak Hahh”.

Source: Instagram Account @thifalislami.

In the fifth interaction in this post, the influencer is reviewing the restaurant Sambel Dadak Hahh, along with its menu and price list. It shows interaction between followers and the influencer in the comments section. A comment from @renysupartha says, “I’ve tried it the sambal is really good. The portion is just right,” to which @thifalislami replies, “It’s genuinely spicy in just the right way.” @sayafirman_nf comments, “The Reel came out right at lunchtime,” and @thifalislami responds, “Hahaha, that’s a temptation, isn’t it?”

Then a comment from @bayutegarwjy tagged his friends so they could see this post, and received a reply from @thifalislami “gageluh” which translates to “come on, hurry up” in Indonesian. The words Thifal Islami used in that comment were meant to encourage his followers to visit and try the food at the restaurant “Sambal Dadak Haahh.

Based on Thifal Islami’s replies to comments, the language used by Thifal Islami aligns with Norton’s communication style theory and is classified as friendly, relaxed, and open. This communication style fosters emotional closeness and strengthens the bond between the influencer and their followers through interactions in the comments section.

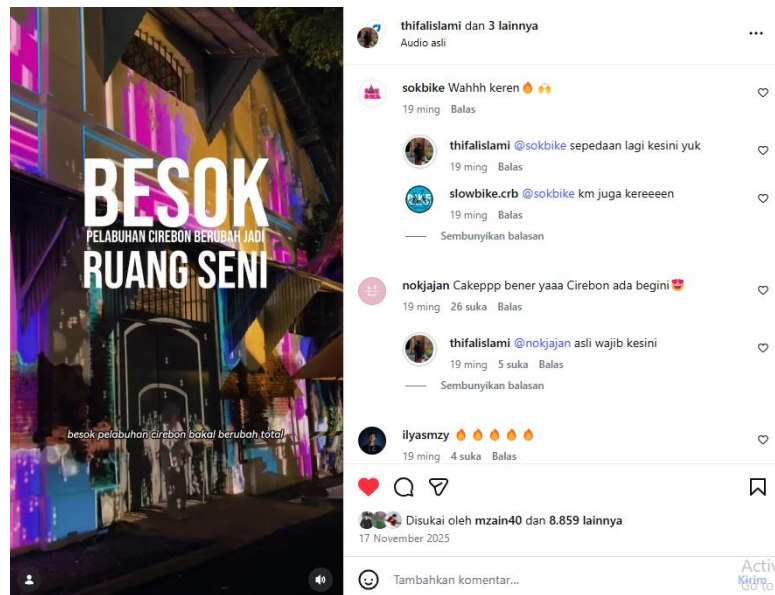


Figure 7: Comment Interaction on Reels from the Cirebon Media Arts Community Festival 2025.

Source: Instagram Account *@thifalislami*.

The sixth interaction took place in a Reels post about the Media Arts Community Festival. In this Reels post, Thifal Islami shared information about an upcoming art exhibition organized by the media arts community. The post included comments from his followers expressing their admiration for the festival, to which Thifal Islami, of course, replied. For example, a comment from *@sokbike* saying “Wow, that’s cool” was replied to by *@thifalislami* with “Let’s go cycling here again.” *@nokjajan* commented “It’s really awesome, isn’t it? Cirebon has something like this,” to which *@thifalislami* replied, “You really have to come here.” From Thifal Islami’s replies to his followers, a combination of interactive styles is evident: building rapport, demonstrating enthusiasm, and engaging in open, direct communication. These characteristics, when categorized according to Norton’s communication styles, fall under the open, friendly, and animated styles.

This study found that the communication patterns of Thifal Islami, a micro-influencer on Instagram, are significantly correlated with the communication characteristics of influencers deemed effective in previous studies. The use of a communication style that is friendly, open, relaxed, expressive, and dynamic indicates that communication in the digital space serves not only as a tool for conveying information but also as a means of building interpersonal social relationships. There are five forms of communication patterns applied by the influencer, the first is a friendly communication style, an expressive communication style, a relaxed communication style, an open communication style, and an animated communication style. In addition, there are four forms of interaction established

Luhur Iran Pangestu
DOI 10.62885/polisci.v3i6.1210

by influencers through Instagram content, including posts, captions, and replies in the comments section. The most dominant communication style used by influencers in building interactions with followers is the “Open communication style”.

Visual communication and digital storytelling, along with an expressive, dynamic communication style on the @thifalislami account, reinforce the findings of a study published in Meyshinta. The study confirms that nonverbal elements such as facial expressions, voice, intonation, and body language in audiovisual content play a crucial role in capturing the audience’s attention and increasing engagement. Influencers who can display natural, energetic expressions tend to create a more authentic impression, so that the message conveyed is perceived as a genuine representation of themselves, not just a persona. This is reflected in the responses from Thifal Islami’s followers, which indicate a sense of comfort and closeness in their interactions.

The predominance of an open communication style in this study is strongly linked to the findings of netnographic research on influencers’ communication practices on social media. Research in (T, Agus. B, 2025). emphasizes that an influencer’s openness in sharing personal experiences, perspectives, and daily activities can build trust and strengthen emotional bonds with their followers. This openness fosters a sense of social closeness that makes followers feel valued and engaged, even when interactions take place virtually. In the context of this study, Thifal Islami’s openness is evident in his manner of speaking, his promptness in answering questions, and his willingness to engage in interactions without creating distance from his followers. The patterns of interaction that emerge through captions, comment sections, and Reels also align with the findings of a study published in (R, Afifah. N, 2025) and (Amirudin, 2019). Both studies reveal that two-way, ongoing communication is the key indicator of successful influencer communication on social media. Captions designed to spark discussion and consistent responses to comments help create a closer and more meaningful interactive experience for followers. This pattern is clearly evident on the @thifalislami account, where followers are not merely recipients of messages but also play an active role in the ongoing communication process.

The findings of this study are consistent with the results of the research (Khumayah, 2025), regarding the use of Instagram by media partner @Mistakeworld in disseminating news about the music community in Cirebon. The study shows that success in building audience engagement does not depend solely on the quantity of content but rather on the consistent application of an authentic and responsive communication approach. The same

applies to Thifal Islami. Influencers who prioritize transparency, honesty, and equality in their communication are considered better able to maintain follower loyalty compared to those who focus solely on image-building. An open attitude not only increases audience trust but also strengthens the effectiveness of other communication styles such as friendliness, expressiveness, and approachability.

The communication style employed by Thifal Islami reflects an adaptive, authentic, and relationship-oriented approach to influencer communication, particularly for micro-influencers. The primary contribution of this study lies in reinforcing the understanding that success in building engagement on Instagram is not determined solely by popularity or follower count, but by the consistent use of an open, responsive communication style to foster meaningful digital relationships.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Thifal Islami consistently applies five dimensions of communication style when interacting with their followers on Instagram. These five styles include a friendly, open, relaxed, expressive, and animated approach. Of these five approaches, the open communication style is the most dominant and serves as the primary foundation for building trust and emotional closeness with the audience. This openness is manifested through an authentic attitude that does not create distance from followers, honesty in expressing opinions, and a willingness to share personal experiences. The dominance of the open style lends authenticity to the other dimensions of communication, so that friendliness does not appear forced, expressiveness feels natural, and a relaxed tone creates comfort in interaction.

This multidimensional combination forms a distinctive communication style that's easily recognized by the community of followers. The interaction patterns developed by influencers occur through four main communication channels on Instagram: post captions, visual content such as videos and reels, and responses in the comments section. Each channel serves a specific function in fostering ongoing relationships with the audience. Captions and visual content serve as the opening to communication, inviting follower participation, while the comments section becomes a public dialogue space involving many parties simultaneously. These three forms of interaction do not stand alone but reinforce one another in forming a comprehensive communication ecosystem. Consistency in responding and actively engaging across each of these communication channels demonstrates the

influencer's commitment to maintaining the quality of their relationship with their followers, rather than merely pursuing the quantity of interactions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, C. dan Cutlip, S. (2006). *Effective Public Relations*. Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group.
- Amirudin, Y. (2019). Hubungan Penggunaan Instagram dengan Self-Presentation Mahasiswa Perguruan Tinggi Tangerang Selatan. *JSJ: Jurnal Studi Jurnalistik*, 1, 68–78. <http://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/jsj>
- Arikunto, S. (2019). *Prosedur penelitian: Suatu pendekatan praktik* (Edisi Revisi). Rineka Cipta. Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, ed. 31. (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2017).
- Astawa, A. D. S. (2022). Gaya komunikasi selebgram @ayuguns dalam endorsement produk di media sosial. *Jurnal Mahasiswa Prodi Ilmu Komunikasi*, 2(2).
- Bruns, I. (2018). Perceived Authenticity and Trust in Social Media-driven Influencer Marketing and their influence on Intention-to-Buy of 18-24 year-olds in Ireland. *Dublin Business School*. <https://esourch.dbs.ie/handle/10788/3536>
- Febriana, S. Nabila & P. (2025). Analisis Gaya Berkomunikasi Online Influencer Vania Winola Melalui. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi Dan Media Sosial (JKOMDIS)*, 5(1), 92–106. <https://doi.org/10.47233/jkomdis.v5i1.2273>
- Freberg, K., Graham, K., McGaughey, K., & Freberg, L. A. (2011). Who are the social media influencers? A study of public perceptions of personality. *Public Relations Review*, 37(1), 90–92. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2010.11.001>
- Hanaya, D., dkk (2024). Peran endorsement @ndshvv dan @fuziah_alya dalam mempromosikan Camille Beauty di media sosial tiktok." *Matriks Jurnal Sosial Nd Sains*, 6.
- Herviani, V., Hadi, P. dan N. (2020). Analisis Pengaruh Brand Trust, E-wom, dan Social Media Influencer terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Lipstik Pixy. *Prosiding Biema*. Jakarta.
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59–68. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.09.003>
- Khumayah, S. et. al. (2025). The Utilization of Instagram Social Media on @Mistakeworld's Media Partners for Spreading News. *Asian Journal of Management Analytics (AJMA)*, 4. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.55927/ajma.v4i3.15147>
- Miles, M., Huberman, A., & Saldana, J. (2014). *A Methods Sourcebook*, Edition 3. USA: Sage Publications. Tjetjep Rohindi Rohidi, UI-Press.
- Moleong. (2021). *Metodelogi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Revisi). Rosda.
- R, Afifah. N, F. A. (2025). Analisis Personal Branding Jeniffer Coppen sebagai Influencer dan entrepreneur di media Instagram. *MUKASI: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 4. <https://doi.org/10.54259/mukasi.v4i3.5097>
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: CV. Alfabeta.
- Setiadi, A. (2016). Pemanfaatan media sosial untuk efektivitas komunikasi. *Cakrawala*, 16(2).
- T, Agus. B, P. (2025). Gaya Komunikasi Influencer Game Mobile Legends Pada Komunikasi Interpersonal Mahasiswa Universitas Dian Nuswantoro Semarang. *Jurnal Netnografi Komunikasi*, 3(Vol. 3 No. 1 (2024): JNK Terakreditasi Nasional Peringkat SINTA 5 berdasarkan SK Kemendikti Saintek RI No.10/C/C3/DT.05.00/2025).

<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.59408/jnk.v3i1.22>

Wihayati, W. (2017). *Marketing Celebrities Sebagai Strategi Dalam Iklan*.