



From Claims to Promises: Unveiling Speech Acts in Indonesian Sunscreen Packaging

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Abstract

Sunscreen usage in Indonesia has increased due to its location at the Equator, which causes many local manufacturers and brands to introduce sunscreen products to meet the market demand. This study aims to analyze the speech acts in the text on the front packaging of 131 facial sunscreen products from 60 Indonesian brands released between 2015 and 2024, using AntCont software (version 4.2.0) as the corpus data. The analysis identifies 411 word types representing locutionary acts, categorized into ten major groups: sunscreen-related matters, expected features, sunscreen descriptions, ingredients, war-related terms, medicine-related terms, fabricated names, skin problems, undesirable aspects, and names. The illocutionary acts derived from these locutionary acts include assertive, commissive, declarative, and directive acts. From these, the possible perlocutionary acts suggest that brands attempt to boost product sales and gain consumer trust by using neutral, less forceful, and more informative language. Brands strive to make all necessary information visible on the front of packaging to improve understanding across diverse demographic groups, thereby helping build consumer trust and brand loyalty. This approach is expected to enhance brand profits and increase product sales.

Keywords: *Indonesian sunscreen products, local brands, marketing, speech acts, sunscreen packaging*

Abstrak

Lokasi geografis Indonesia di garis khatulistiwa menjadi salah satu faktor bahwa tabir surya wajib digunakan sehari-hari, sehingga banyak produsen merek lokal memperkenalkan produk tabir surya untuk memenuhi permintaan pasar. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tindak tutur pada teks bagian depan kemasan 131 produk tabir surya khusus wajah dari 60 merek Indonesia yang dirilis antara tahun 2015 dan 2024, yang dikelompokkan dengan menggunakan perangkat lunak AntCont (versi 4.2.0) sebagai data korpus. Analisis penelitian ini mengidentifikasi 411 jenis kata yang mewakili tindak lokusi yang dikategorikan ke dalam 10 kelompok besar, yaitu hal-hal terkait tabir surya, fitur yang diharapkan, deskripsi tabir surya, bahan tabir surya, istilah terkait perang, istilah terkait kedokteran, nama buatan produsen, masalah kulit, aspek yang tidak diharapkan, dan nama lainnya. Tindak ilokusi yang dapat ditemukan dari tindak lokusi tersebut meliputi tindak asertif, komisif, deklaratif, dan direktif. Dari sini, kemungkinan tindak perlokusinya menunjukkan bahwa merek lokal berusaha meningkatkan penjualan produk dan meraih kepercayaan konsumen dengan menggunakan bahasa yang netral, tidak memaksa, dan lebih informatif. Produsen berusaha mencakup seluruh informasi yang dibutuhkan di bagian depan kemasan demi meningkatkan pemahaman berbagai kelompok demografis yang berbeda, sehingga dapat membangun kepercayaan konsumen dan loyalitas merek. Pendekatan ini diharapkan dapat meningkatkan penjualan produk dan keuntungan merek.

Kata kunci: *kemasan tabir surya, merek lokal, pemasaran, produk tabir surya Indonesia, tindak tutur*

Introduction

One personal skincare product that has experienced rapid growth is sunscreen. This occurs because modern society has become increasingly aware of the importance of caring for their body, including maintaining healthy skin, for their overall well-being. Pamudji (2019) denotes that the skin is the organ most frequently exposed to UV radiation; thus, it is prone to various diseases, such as erythema, sunburn, aging, photosensitivity, and carcinogenesis. Thus, sunscreen products are highly recommended, chiefly in countries with prolonged exposure to sunlight (Tranggono & Latifah, 2007). Interestingly, sunscreen has become a staple in skincare and beauty maintenance products in recent years.

In Indonesia, the use of sunscreen has become increasingly popular, given the country's tropical climate, which has led to the emergence of various local manufacturers and brands. Not only do the products protect against UV radiation exposure, but the sunscreen brands and manufacturers in Indonesia also equip their products with beauty and care functions. Besides SPF and PA, various local sunscreen products offer additional benefits to meet the demand of Indonesian consumers. A way to highlight these advantages is by displaying fascinating and favorable information on the product's packaging. A well-designed and thoughtfully conceptualized packaging can convince consumers that the products have good quality (Ermawati, 2019), affecting their purchase decisions (Ampuero & Vila, 2006).

Since sunscreen is a skincare product related to the body's health and beauty, clear information should be printed on the packaging. Therefore, the writing on the packaging becomes crucial for consumers before deciding to purchase a sunscreen product. According to Halliday's (1978) theory, the language in packaging writing is a personal function used to express feelings, emotions, and deep reactions (Tarigan, 2009, p. 6). Moreover, Vardani (2017, via Purnomo, Wahyudi, & Santoso, 2021) points out that language is a tool for expressing oneself and conveying information about oneself and others. Thus, the language used in sunscreen packaging is the brand's way of expressing its products through written information.

Unfortunately, sunscreen packaging often lacks sufficient space to convey the intended information. Therefore, employing intriguing, concise, and targeted language should be emphasized to communicate information related to the product. Noting that sunscreen is manufactured for sale to consumers, the language on its packaging does not merely serve to express itself, but also becomes a medium to promote its sale. This aligns with Halliday's (1978) language function of instrumental. In its instrumental function, language generates specific conditions and events (Setiawan, 2018). In this context, language can even influence the interlocutor's behavior to achieve the speaker's goal. Therefore, the proper use of language in sunscreen packaging can impact consumers in a way that encourages them to purchase the sunscreen product in line with the brand's intention.

Comprehending the brand's purpose in including writing on the sunscreen packaging demonstrates how they want their consumers to take action with their products. Austin's (1962) speech act theory is relevant to this case. He remarks that when a person utilizes language, he not only creates a series of isolated utterances but also performs an action (Maskuri, 2024). Therefore, he commits something or makes others do something by using a language known as performative language (Safitri, Mulyani, & Farikah, 2021).

Speech acts can be analyzed through context and communicative situations (Nicolaescu, 2025). Additionally, speech acts can be classified based on their functions rather than their forms (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 251). There are three acts involved in making utterances. The first is the locutionary act, which consists of conveying utterances with words and sentences according to their dictionary meanings and following the syntax rules (Rahadi, 2008, via Agustina & Simarmata, 2022). The second is the illocutionary act, which represents the meaning of the locution and becomes the act of performing an action when speaking (Maskuri, 2024). Then, the perlocutionary act refers to the effect the utterance has on the listeners. In summary, perlocution is the impact of the utterance (locution) conveyed with a particular intention (illocution) (Saifudin, 2019).

The locution in this current study refers to the writings on the packaging of Indonesian sunscreen products, which, interestingly, demonstrate an indirect illocution that arises from the difference between the locution and illocution. What the speaker utters has a different meaning or intention, or can occur due to the absence of a direct correlation between the structure or form and its illocution (Rahayu, Degaf, & Anggrisia, 2024). While direct illocution does not require any context, indirect illocution must provide context in the utterances. Thus, the speaker and the interlocutor should share similar background knowledge of the context (Zhu & Li, 2025). In further understanding speech acts, Searle (1979) dissects the illocutionary acts from Austin's theory into five categories, namely assertive, commissive, directive, declarative, and expressive acts.

Several studies have focused on speech acts. Iriana, Martutik, and Susanto's (2024) study aims to identify the speech acts in campaign billboard jargon used by candidates for Blitar's Regent and Deputy Regent in 2024. The results indicate that the campaign billboards utilize jargon from local socio-cultural contexts to create positive images for persuading prospective voters. Another study by Afzaal (2022) examined the speech act in 30 Pakistani advertisements from newspapers, magazines, and Facebook to see the implied and stated purposes. The results signify that the primary purpose of the ads found in the data is to convince readers to purchase products by providing information that prospective buyers require. Meanwhile, Al-Humairah, Retnowaty, and Ratnawati (2020) conducted a speech act analysis on Indonesian beauty product commercials, including lip cream, facial scrub, facial foam, and brightening cream, aired on private television stations. The results demonstrate that the commercials exhibit assertive, directive, expressive, and commissive illocutionary acts.

Unlike the three previous studies on speech acts, this study scrutinizes the speech acts on sunscreen packaging based on Austin's (1962) theory. The locutionary act in this study is the writing on the front of boxes and bottles of Indonesian sunscreen

products, which contains key information from the brands. The writings are processed as corpus data, with a focus on technical words, which are specialized words typically employed in a particular discipline, and high-frequency vocabulary, that is, the words that most commonly appear in texts (Nation, 2022). Furthermore, it is essential to observe the illocutionary acts that brands aim to communicate through the most frequent categories on their sunscreen products. Therefore, Searle's (1979) illocutionary acts are a key aspect in explaining the perlocutionary acts, noting that brands' objectives influence the effects and outcomes of their sunscreen packaging.

Method

This qualitative study investigated the writings on the front packaging of facial sunscreen products from various brands that were primarily manufactured and marketed in Indonesia from 2015 to 2024. This period was chosen because manufacturers attempted to meet market demand by adding other functions to local sunscreen products, as indicated by the varying number of tokens that followed beauty standards in Indonesia. Brands with local branding yet not produced nationwide, local brands from aesthetic clinics, body sunscreen, and sunscreen products for babies and kids were excluded from this study. Following these criteria, this study covered 60 local brands manufactured in cities across Indonesia.

A total of 131 facial sunscreen products were obtained from the 60 Indonesian brands. The descriptions on the products' front boxes and bottles were then converted into a .txt file to serve as corpus data in AntConc software (version 4.2.0) (Anthony, 2022). In AntConc, the "word" tab was clicked and sorted by "type" to generate the output. An initial total of 485 words, with 2,196 occurrences, was gathered from the sunscreen products. These words were then filtered by removing single letters, pronouns, articles, and prepositions, while conjoining words to create noun and verb phrases, singular and plural words, and words with different spellings (referring to American English). Therefore, the final number of word types was 411, with a total of 1,713 frequencies. After that, these word types were classified into their respective categories for analysis using the illocutionary act theory by Searle (1979). Subsequently, the locution, illocution, and perlocution of the data were further scrutinized by utilizing the speech act theory by Austin (1962).

Result and Discussion

The sorting process produced 411 word types with 1,713 frequencies, which formed the locutionary act. The words were then categorized into ten categories, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The Categories of Word Types in Indonesian Sunscreen Products

No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Sunscreen-related matters	674	39.35%
2	Expected features	274	16.00%
3	Sunscreen description	272	15.88%

4	Ingredients	197	11.50%
5	War-related terms	163	9.52%
6	Medicine-related terms	58	3.39%
7	Fabricated names	41	2.39%
8	Skin problems	19	1.11%
9	Undesirable aspects	12	0.70%
10	Names	3	0.18%
Total		1,713	100%

Table 1 shows that the category with the highest frequency was sunscreen-related matters. This category included the terms specifically related to sunscreen, containing sunscreen technical terms (e.g., “SPF,” “PA,” “UV,” UVA,” “UVB,” and “broad-spectrum”), sunscreen forms (e.g., “gel,” “cream,” lotion,” “moisturizer,” “cushion,” foundation,” “powder,” “spray,” and “serum”), and sunscreen types (e.g., “mineral,” “physical,” “chemical,” and “hybrid”). This suggests that a sunscreen product must clearly display these specific terms on its packaging to indicate the level of protection it provides, the type of sunscreen it is, and its form.

Another category with terms related to sunscreen terminology was sunscreen description. This category comprised the supporting terms on sunscreen products, which were also usually found in other skincare products. It was further divided into several sub-categories, such as body parts (e.g., “skin,” “face,” “pore,” “cells,” and “body”), colors (e.g., “peach,” “green,” “translucent,” and “transparent”), textures (e.g., “airy,” “watery,” “matte,” “milky,” “silky,” and “powdery”), activities (e.g., “running” and “swimming”), time reference (e.g., “daily,” “day,” “hours,” “minutes,” and “morning”), and locations (e.g., “Indonesia,” “areas,” and “city”). These terms appeared on sunscreen packaging to provide additional information beyond the main details on the sunscreen-related matters, offering consumers more insight about the products.

Besides the locutionary act, this study identified four illocutionary acts from the corpus data: assertive, commissive, declarative, and directive acts. However, no expressive illocutionary act was observed. The first illocutionary act found in the data was the assertive act, which, according to Searle (1979), focuses on the claims or propositions the speaker believes to be true. From the corpus data, three categories fell under the assertive function: ingredients, fabricated names, and undesirable aspects. The first category, ingredients, had 102 types and 197 occurrences in the corpus data. These 102 types were then divided into ten functions presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The Ingredient Functions and The Frequencies

No.	Category	Frequency
1	Soothing	62
2	Others	26
3	Hydration	25
4	Brightening	25
5	Antioxidant	22
6	Protecting	12
7	Improving skin barrier	10

8	Anti-acne	7
9	Anti-aging	5
10	Anti-pollution	3
Total		197

Table 2 shows that soothing becomes the function most commonly found in ingredients that brands attempted to highlight on their packaging. The five ingredients with the highest frequencies in the category were Cica (*Centella asiatica*), green tea (*Camellia sinensis*), aloe vera (*Aloe barbadensis*), allantoin, and oat. The second function was hydration, which was achieved through the inclusion of hyaluronic acid, provitamin B5 (panthenol), heart leaf, betaine, and grape leaf. The third function was brightening, with its five highest ingredients: vitamin B3 (niacinamide), vitamin C (ascorbic acid), tranexamic acid, chromanyl, and golden bell. Meanwhile, others refer to the ingredient's function that could not be identified and comprises forms such as "active," "agent," "capsules," and "solution." With this information, brands attempted to state that their products truthfully contained the mentioned ingredients. Therefore, prospective buyers could select sunscreen products with ingredients that best suit their skin's needs.

Soothing, hydration, and brightening were the three qualities with the highest occurrences that the brands attempted to incorporate into their sunscreen products, as indicated by the majority of the ingredients mentioned on their sunscreen packaging. According to the ingredients listed on the packaging, they claimed that their sunscreen products could calm consumers' skin while evening out their skin tone. Notably, while sunscreen products were primarily intended to protect the users, the protective function ranked sixth, with 12 occurrences, alongside zinc oxide, titanium oxide, and Skin Boost DNATM as the protective agents. It denoted that brands assumed the consumers had understood the primary function of sunscreen, so the protective ingredients should not be highlighted on the packaging.

The second category from the assertive illocutionary act was undesirable aspects, which comprised four types with 12 occurrences across the entire dataset. Undesirable aspects were the items that the consumers avoided in sunscreen products. The items comprised alcohol as the most avoided item, followed by benzene, hypoallergenic, and dull. For instance, alcohol is mainly avoided since it has several unwanted properties concerning sunscreen products, such as the absence of influence on sunscreen's photostability and flammability, which does not improve the sunscreen's protective ability (Couteau et al., 2021). Alcohol is also considered an allergen in sunscreen products, though it is categorized as a lower prevalence (Keyes, Werth, & Brod, 2019). Society's perception of alcohol in skincare and cosmetic products is also related to the halal status of the product, as they believe that a halal product must not contain alcohol (Nurkhasanah, Nurul, & Albab, 2020). Similar to mentioning ingredients, local sunscreen brands aimed to demonstrate that their products were safe since they did not contain the substances that consumers avoid, which can build consumers' trust.

The final category of the assertive illocutionary act was fabricated names. These were the product names created by the brands to make their sunscreen products unique and create a one-of-a-kind impression. This category comprised 32 types, with 41 occurrences, divided into eight patterns, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The Patterns of Fabricated Names

No.	Pattern	Example	Origin
1	Purposes	Acnecare	Acne + care
		Hydrasoothe	Hydrating + soothing
		Hydra	Hydrating + moisturizing +
		Moiscreen	sunscreen
2	Sun + Others	Sunmazing	Sun + amazing
		Sunshield	Sun + shield
		Sunfriends	Sun + friends
3	Ingredients	Cicamide	Cica + ceramide
		Ergo	L-ergothioneine
		CeraHydro	Ceramide NP + hydroxy acetophenone
4	Verb Phrases	Don't Forget Reset and Go! Copy Paste	
5	Appellations	Boss Babe Hello, Sunshine!	
		Your Skin Bae	
6	Others	Holyshield!	Pun of "holy shit"
		So X-tra!	So + extra
		Whiteness	
7	Ingredients + Forms	Zincscreen	Zinc + sunscreen
		C(e)rum	Vitamin C + serum
		Ceraspray	Ceramide + spray
8	Purposes + Ingredients	Hydramax-C	Hydrating + maximum + vitamin C

Purposes became the most frequent pattern for this category. This pattern became brands' claims, stating to prospective consumers that their products offered additional functions beyond protection through the names they created. For instance, the name "Hydrasoothe" suggests that the product can both hydrate and soothe the skin while protecting from UV rays. The second pattern with the highest frequency was the word "sun" combined with other words. With this pattern, the sunscreen brands attempted to emphasize the primary purpose of sunscreen: protecting the users from the sun's rays. For instance, the name "Sunfriends" implies that by using this product, consumers no longer have to fear the sun, as they will be protected and become friends with it. The third pattern with the highest occurrence was ingredients. Sunscreen brands incorporated ingredients into the product names to highlight the main ingredients in the products, so that potential buyers would not have to read the ingredient list or guess what was inside. For example, "Cicamide" indicates that the sunscreen product contains Cica (*Centella asiatica*) and ceramide as its main ingredients. Only by noticing the product's fabricated name could consumers select what kind of sunscreen products their skin might need.

The second illocutionary act observed from the data was the commissive act, which, according to Yule (1996), is the act by which the speaker comprehends relating himself to future actions, such as promises, offers, vows, and agreements. The first commissive form in the data was the promises printed on the sunscreen packaging by the brands. The promises were evident in phrases such as “blue light protector,” “pollution protector,” “UVA, UVB, and blue light protection,” and “anti-blue light and anti-pollution.” Blue light and pollution are external factors that can negatively affect the skin, and these terms are often featured on sunscreen packaging. By mentioning them, local brands attempted to assure consumers that their sunscreen products would protect their skin from such harmful substances.

The following commissive form discovered in the data was an offer in the form of expected features. Expected features referred to the favored attributes or qualities consumers anticipated in a sunscreen product. This category contained 93 words, with the ten most frequently used words shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Ten Words in the Expected Feature Category with the Highest Frequencies

Rank	Data	Freq	Total	Rank	Data	Freq	Total
1	Lightweight	11	21	6	Non-comedogenic	10	10
	Light	10		7	Natural	9	9
	Bright	4		8	No white cast	9	9
2	Brighten	3	19	9	Anti-pollutant	4	8
	Brightening	12			Anti-pollution	4	
3	Soothe	5	16	9	Calming	7	8
	Soothing	11			Calm	1	
4	Glow	11	12	9	Fresh	7	8
	Glowing	1			Freshness	1	
	Waterproof	3			Moist	2	
5	Water-resistant	8	11	10	Moisturizes	2	7
6	Hydrate	1	10		Moisturizing	3	7
	Hydrating	9		10	Non-greasy	7	

Table 4 indicates that the qualities consumers expected most from a sunscreen product were related to the ease of application. The products should be “light/lightweight,” “waterproof/water resistant,” “non-comedogenic,” “natural,” “no white cast,” and “non-greasy.” These words and phrases demonstrated that consumers prioritized comfort and needs when selecting a sunscreen brand. For instance, products labeled “light/lightweight” on the packaging offer a weightless feel, as they are quickly absorbed into the skin, making it more comfortable to apply to the face.

Another feature that prospective buyers anticipated from a sunscreen product was its benefits beyond its protective attribute. The sunscreen products should “soothe/soothing,” “hydrate/hydrating,” “calm /calming,” “fresh/freshness,” “moist/moisturizes/moisturizing,” and “anti-pollutant /anti-pollution.” Besides convenience and ease, the brands also offered various skincare benefits in their sunscreen products to support the skin’s health based on consumer needs. Notably, there was another

expected feature that was irrelevant to the protection purpose, but more to the appearance, such as “bright/brighten/brightening” and “glow/glowing.” By placing these words on the front packaging, sunscreen brands attempted to convey that their products could also irradiate and beautify the skin, in addition to protecting it from sun radiation. By featuring these benefits on the packaging, local brands offered consumers multiple advantages in a single product.

Interestingly, sunscreen brands also employed war-related terms to enhance the promises and offers printed on the front packaging, thereby utilizing limited space effectively. War-related terms generally refer to the words associated with battles, for instance, “fighter,” “defender,” and “haters” to refer to the subjects in war. They also used the words “power,” “damage,” invincible,” and “supreme” to emphasize the strength of the products. In addition to subjects and strengths, terms with connotations of attack and defense also appeared on the packaging, as presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Words with Defense and Attack Connotations and Their Frequencies

Meaning	Word	Freq	Meaning	Word	Freq
Defense	Protection	80	Attack	Battle	5
	Shield	21		Against	3
	Protect	11		Beat	2
	Barrier	9		Counter	1
	Protector	9		Combat	1
	Defense	6			
	Protective	3			
	Protecting	1			
	Melindungi	1			

According to Table 5, the words with connotations of attack and defense found on sunscreen packaging were intended to attract potential buyers and enhance the impression that sunscreen’s protective quality is its primary feature. Indonesia is a tropical country with high intensity of sunlight, which increases dullness and health risks to consumers’ skin. By utilizing these war-related terms, brands wanted to strongly impress that they would fight to fulfill their promises and offers of protecting their skin from the sun, which they considered an enemy. Therefore, these terms would intensify the commissive act of promises to defend the face from external interferences as the sunscreen’s primary purpose and simultaneously offer numerous features that consumers expect in a sunscreen product.

The third illocutionary act extracted from the data was the declarative illocutionary act. Searle (1979) states that the declarative illocutionary act serves as a status changer by utilizing official remarks from an authorized party. Two types of data fell under this category: medicine-related terms and names. Medicine-related terms were specifically used in or were often related to the medical field. In the data, these words appeared 58 times in 14 different words: “tested,” “dermatologically,” “clinically,” “in vitro,” “approved,” “proven,” “formula,” “agreed,” “approved by,” “certified,” “dermatologist,” “test,” “suitability,” and “verified.” Brands could not haphazardly claim that their sunscreen products were safe in specific ways, particularly regarding the product’s safety and protective quality. Therefore, they needed a third

party to verify that their products were genuinely risk-free for consumers. As a result, brands would perform laboratory tests to reassure their consumers that their sunscreen products were harmless, for instance, by being “dermatologically” or “clinically tested” by trusted authorities. After making the official claim, the brands could eventually inform consumers through the packaging without needing to include laboratory results on the label.

Another category in this illocutionary act was names, which were related to the names of official institutions that provide certification in the cosmetics industry. Only two names appeared in the corpus data: COSMOS (Cosmetic Organic and Natural Standard) and Ecocert. Both international organizations focus on certifying that the raw materials used in cosmetic or skincare products are organic and natural, so the products with these materials are safe for end users (COSMOS, 2025). These certifications ensure that a product or brand is sustainable and environmentally friendly, from the farming process to the final product, making the product or brand more trustworthy (Ecocert Group, 2025). By stating that their products contained ingredients certified by such institutions, sunscreen brands attempted to convey that their products were safe, ethical, and eco-friendly. Therefore, consumers could trust that the brands did not cause environmental damage.

The final illocutionary act identified from the data was a directive act, which took the form of suggestions offered by several brands. The suggestions were associated with instructions to meet the consumers’ needs. The data with suggestive indications were divided into six sub-categories with 26 occurrences, presented in Table 6.

Table 6. The Sub-Categories of Directive Illocutionary Acts

No.	Sub-Category	Frequency
1	Skin types	11
2	Skin problems	5
3	Body parts	4
4	People	2
5	Time	2
6	Activities	2
Total		26

Table 6 demonstrates that the recommendations, primarily found on the packaging, focused on skin types, such as “for dry skin,” “targeted for oily and combination skin,” “targeted for dry, normal, and combination skin,” “suitable for sensitive skin,” “for oily skin,” and “for all skin types.” These recommendations were vital in helping potential buyers select sunscreen products that matched their skin types. Another key suggestion was related to skin issues. Several brands suggested that their sunscreen products were safe for specific skin conditions, for instance, “for acne-prone skin,” “for sun-reactive, acne-prone skin,” and “for inhibiting erythema.” These phrases indicated that these brands recommended sunscreen products suitable for customers’ skin to prevent aggravating their existing skin problems. Additional suggestions were more targeted toward sunscreen users (e.g., “for all-day lovers”), usage times (e.g., “for daily use”), activities requiring sunscreen (e.g., “for swimming,

running, and other outdoor activities”), and particular body parts other than the face (e.g., “for face and body”). These suggestions emphasized the sunscreen’s primary purpose: protecting users during outdoor activities throughout the day.

Based on the locutionary and illocutionary acts, a fascinating conclusion can be drawn about the possible perlocutionary act. Sunscreen serves a purpose beyond being just a cosmetic product; it is a medical item that can protect the skin from various diseases. Therefore, this product’s packaging differs significantly from that of other beauty products. Sunscreen packaging often features technical vocabulary, such as “SPF” and “PA,” which manufacturers use to convey safety and build consumer trust. These terms should be supported by scientific tests from third-party labs to prevent overclaiming and misleading consumers, as the viscosity, stickiness, or white cast of sunscreens does not directly determine their safety or protection level (Sagita, 2023). If brands skip lab testing and randomly assign SPF numbers to their packaging, the claimed SPF may not match the actual SPF level (Rachma & Borshalina, 2024). This mismatch can adversely compromise the product’s ability to protect the skin and harm the users. Consequently, laboratory testing, denoted by “clinically tested” or “dermatologically approved,” has become a tool for sunscreen brands to project quality and earn consumer trust, ultimately encouraging product purchases. This has given sunscreen a unique and strong position in the beauty market, as it is a necessary skincare product that can pose health risks if not used daily. Such technical vocabulary is not typically present in other cosmetic and skincare items, which primarily serve aesthetic purposes without specific health claims.

Although sunscreen was initially a skincare product focused on skin health to prevent skin cancer and other skin diseases, local sunscreen brands nowadays also intend their products to be beauty products that can shape users’ ideologies and identities through their packaging. Indonesian sunscreen brands attempt to aid their prospective consumers in building self-image as beautiful, healthy, and religious individuals. For example, many brands use the words “brightening” and “glowing” to appeal to the Indonesian people’s desire, while most prefer having tan skin (Arwanda, Wulandari, & Saputra, 2021). It has become an emerging trend, as many beauty representations often portray fair skin as beautiful. However, beauty trends nowadays no longer adore bright, fair skin and instead lean more toward glowing skin, which is perceived as healthy skin (Skiba, 2025). Similarly, when products promise maximum protection every day, local brands support consumers’ energetic and prime condition under the sun with phrases such as “for daily use” or “suitable for swimming, running, and other outdoor activities.” This implies that sunscreen has become the symbol of active individuals who prioritize personal health. Other expected features that often appear on packaging also demonstrate that brands attempt to meet the diverse wishes of consumers and show that their products are multifunctional.

Another interesting ideology appearing on sunscreen packaging is the emergence of “halal” and “halalan toyyiban,” which reflects a key aspect of Indonesian consumers’ identity. The halal label on skincare products, especially sunscreen, has become a crucial factor to consider that can significantly impact Indonesian society’s purchasing intentions (Putra, Cantika, Indriyani, Romadhani, & Lestariyanti, 2022; Rini, Hartadi, & Budiningrum, 2024). One of the reasons behind consumers’ awareness and desire to purchase halal products is religiosity (Anwar & Anwar, 2024).

In this Muslim-majority country, religious consumers prioritize halal products to guard themselves from doubtful ingredients and adhere to religious rules, and choosing halal products becomes one of the essential things for Indonesian Muslims' identity. By assisting consumers in building their self-image, packaging with such messages will indeed influence their purchase intentions.

Meanwhile, the persuasive function in commercial strategies boosts sales by promoting an appealing brand image tailored to the market. Through the indirect illocutionary acts on the sunscreen packaging, local brands attempt to convince potential buyers with subtle yet less aggressive language to purchase their sunscreen products. Instead of explicitly stating "Buy this sunscreen product!", brands wrote phrases like "UV defense," "high protection," "to shield and care," and similar expressions to highlight the sunscreen's function as a skin protector, especially in tropical climates like Indonesia. Other functions mentioned on the packaging, such as "brightening," "antioxidant," and "hydration," also reflect the manufacturers' efforts to promote their products without seeming too pushy. By utilizing this benefit-oriented language on the sunscreen packaging, brands seem to prefer a soft-selling approach over a hard-selling one, since they emphasize customer value by exhibiting product quality (Yosodipuro, 2024).

Moreover, Indonesia's competitive market context requires a brand to build a controversy-free image, which is achieved through indirect illocutionary acts that seem neutral, less forceful, and more informative. By incorporating suggestions on the sunscreen packaging, brands aim to provide consumers with choices that meet their convenience and necessities based on their specific skin conditions. For example, by writing "for oily skin" or "for sun-reactive, acne-prone skin," brands provide buyers with the knowledge and freedom the consumers need. By giving various alternatives, brands seek to influence consumers' buying decisions, which would, in turn, impact their purchasing behavior (Sri-Ubon, 2024). Therefore, offering a range of choices has become a strategy for brands to boost sales by making prospective buyers feel that the products are specifically tailored for them. In doing so, brands attempt to establish consumer trust and encourage potential buyers to purchase their sunscreen products. If consumers are satisfied with the products, they are more likely to remain loyal to the brand and repurchase (Santoso, Waluyo, & Listyorini, 2013).

Marketing will not succeed if the manufacturers or brands only focus on their own interests or objectives (Satria & Junaedi, 2022). Consequently, brands cannot create unnecessary products for society. Considering that Indonesia is located at the Equator with a high likelihood of intense sun exposure (Mumtazah et al., 2020) and that the country's average air pollution level has been three times the WHO guidelines threshold for two decades (Lee & Greenstone, 2021), brands surely need to adjust the type of sunscreen products they develop. The emergence of numerous local sunscreen types demonstrates that Indonesians have diverse needs regarding these products. Therefore, the context will determine the goals of brands and prospective consumers in this case. Leech (1983, via Rahardi, 2020) points out that speech context cannot be ignored when interpreting an utterance. By listing all the required information on a product's packaging, a brand aims to demonstrate that it has met consumer expectations regarding ingredients and quality. This is expected to impact brand profits and increase product sales.

Conclusion

This qualitative study identifies 411 word types with 1,713 frequencies from 131 Indonesian facial sunscreen products, which serve as locutionary acts. These 411 word types are grouped into ten main categories. Meanwhile, the locutionary acts generate four illocutionary acts. From the locutionary and illocutionary acts, the possible perlocutionary act is that brands aim to increase sales and build consumers' trust, encouraging repeated purchases of the same products, especially since sunscreen is a daily skincare necessity. By including all the necessary information on the packaging, brands aim to demonstrate that they have met the requirements consumers demand, from ingredients to quality, thereby fostering brand loyalty. Ultimately, this outcome potentially aligns with brands' goals for boosting product sales.

Furthermore, the analysis results demonstrate that technical and high-frequency vocabulary significantly impact consumer understanding. For instance, younger and more educated consumers are more familiar with technical vocabulary because they are exposed to information through various social and digital media. Consumers with foreign language proficiency, such as English, also comprehend technical vocabulary more effortlessly. Meanwhile, consumers from elderly, less-educated groups, or those with limited foreign language skills often struggle to interpret the meaning of linguistic information on packaging. Therefore, using high-frequency vocabulary can assist consumers from these demographic groups in understanding the technical vocabulary on the packaging. This enables them to quickly and independently decide to purchase the desired sunscreen, as they can immediately grasp the product's benefits. As a result, brands should consider adaptive and communicative language strategies that are neutral, less forceful, and informative, so that a broad audience can accept and understand the product message conveyed through technical and high-frequency vocabulary. This approach not only improves access to information and comprehension across diverse demographic groups but also boosts consumer trust and loyalty toward brands. Ultimately, this might impact the number of product purchases, which is the main goal for sunscreen brands.

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