

Digital begging in the live streaming space on YouTube: A study of communication patterns on Deankt's YouTube channel

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Abstract

The occurrence of "digital begging," in which viewers seek to capture broadcasters' attention through live chat comments or donations, arose from these encounters. This phenomena signifies a transformation in communication systems, wherein social commodities are deemed significant. This research seeks to analyze the interactive communication dynamics between streamer Deankt and their audience, and how these dynamics influence attention-seeking behaviors in the digital realm. The employed methodology is a case study focusing on the YouTube channel Deankt. The research findings demonstrate that attention-seeking conduct manifests through numerous forms of engagement, including requests for prayers, birthday greetings, emotional outbursts, and solicitations for donations aimed at provoking an immediate response from the streamer. This communication pattern prioritizes not only financial profit but also addresses the audience's emotional demand for recognition and connection. Deankt's witty, laid-back, and attentive communication style enhances the parasocial interaction.

Keywords

Digital panhandling, Live broadcasting, YouTube, Interactive discourse, Attention economy

Introduction

Introduction The advancement of digital technology has transformed human communication. Platforms such as YouTube, Twitch, and TikTok Live function as entertainment mediums while fostering novel types of social engagement that are spontaneous, participatory, and emotive. Live streaming facilitates direct interaction between viewers and streams, enhancing engagement and fostering a feeling of community [1]. Research indicates that the act of giving presents or gratuities is favorably associated with increased audience engagement, exemplified by active participation in chat and conversation with streamers [2]. This phenomena illustrates the conduct of viewers who deliberately want to attract the streamer's attention with

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comments, contribution messages, and other forms of interaction. This phenomena delineates a transformation in communication patterns wherein attention is regarded as a desirable social asset [3].

Prior research has highlighted the transformation of attention into a novel economic paradigm known as the attention economy [4]. Streamers frequently cultivate parasocial ties with their audience, which can profoundly influence viewers' emotional well-being and conduct [5]. Moreover, in the realm of digital communication studies, the idea of interactive communication patterns posits that the swift, transparent, and occasionally viewers [6]. According to Woodcock & Johnson, streaming culture is a novel kind of cultural expression in which social interaction and entertainment converge into a unified public performance [7].

Prior research has investigated the complexities of the relationship between streamers and viewers within digital culture. TL Taylor elucidates that streaming culture encompasses live streaming, a social environment where entertainment, performativity, and audience engagement intersect [8]. Crystal Abidin asserts that in digital attention culture, the engagement between producers and followers is motivated by content and the emotional desire for recognition [9]. Woodcock and Johnson emphasize how streamers navigate emotional labor to cultivate closeness and sustain audience commitment [10]. Nonetheless, these studies concentrate on the streamer's perspective, rather than considering the audience's viewpoint as active participants who design communication methods to attract attention. The purpose of this study is to describe the type of digital streaming in Deankt live streaming, analyze the streamer's and streamer's communication style, and explain the phenomenon from the perspective of the economy and streaming culture bilateral exchange of messages influences the dynamics between streamers and

Method

This study employs a qualitative methodology utilizing a case study technique. Robert K. Yin defines a case study as a method of collecting data through the investigation and analysis of real-world phenomena [11]. The research participants comprised two viewers of the YouTube channel Deankt, recruited through purposive sample methods, indicating the intentional selection of informants based on specific research criteria [12]. ng the intentional selection of informants based on specific research criteria [12]. Data gathering procedures are conducted through three primary methods: observation, in-depth interviews, and digital documentation. The Miles & Huberman paradigm facilitates data analysis through three phases: data reduction, data display, and conclusion [13]. During March–July 2025, three live streaming sessions of Deankt will be seen, with a duration of three to four minutes every session. The study focuses on participation in real-time live chat interactions, particularly in the areas of donation requests, customer service inquiries, and emotional responses that highlight the attention span. This observation enables the identification of consistent communication

patterns in interactions between streamers and viewers. Interview is used to understand the perception of the interaction that occurs during live streaming and to validate communication patterns that have been identified through observation.

Results

Findings Live streaming observations on the Deankt YouTube channel indicated that viewers were actively participating in interactive discussion with the streamer. Spontaneous comments are not the sole means of contact; donation notes, personal narratives, and prayer requests all facilitate such engagement. This phenomenon corresponds with Hamilton's findings, which assert that audience participation in live streaming fosters an interactive and collaborative community between streamers and watchers [14]. A notable instance is the @chaosGANTENG account, which distributed tiered donations between Rp10,000 and Rp1,000,000 accompanied by brief notes. All messages were consistently read and personally responded to by Deankt, suggesting that donations were employed as a means to attract attention at Figure 1.



Figure 1. (a) Snapshot of the first donation of Rp. 10,000; (b) Snapshot of the second donation of Rp. 1,000,000

today; after 8 years of marriage, my wife is finally pregnant. Please pray for us, sir," to which Deankt replied with congrats and prayers. Comparable exchanges were evident in communications from @mdondy, who stated, "Sir, I request your prayers for my father's recovery," to which Deankt promptly responded with empathy, offering prayers and emotional support. This indicates that live streaming serves not only as a form of entertainment but also as a social environment where viewers pursue emotional validation.

Simultaneously, the outcomes of interviews with two audience members corroborated these observational findings. The initial respondent indicated that the motivation for viewing was Deankt's "coolness in his interaction with the audience." He remarked that it was "truly gratifying when he read my comment, as it made me feel acknowledged," signifying a sense of being esteemed and recognized by the streamer. The second responder stated, "Deankt is akin to a friend; although I do not know him, it feels intimate," indicating the development of emotional proximity despite the virtual connection at Figure 2.

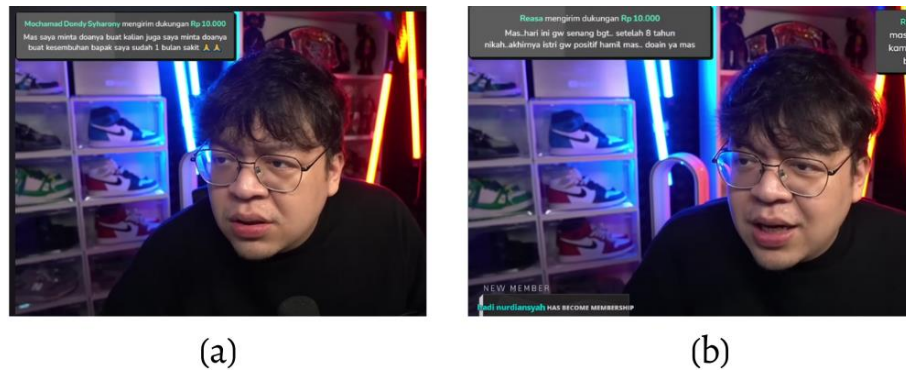


Figure 2. Excerpt of language and style of donation begging and deankt's reaction to donation

Discussion

Discourse This study's findings demonstrate that the interaction between the streamer and the audience on the Deankt channel transcends mere entertainment, establishing new social interactions within the digital realm. In the framework of attention economy theory, attention is regarded as a valuable commodity in the digital realm [15]. The tiered donation phenomena displayed by the @chaosGANTENG account illustrates that streamer attention may be acquired through financial contributions, functioning not merely as support but as a form of social currency for obtaining recognition [16]. The audience seeks affirmation by name references, acknowledgment of presence, or personalized replies to Deankt. For instance, Deankt replied to a voice message from the audience member @11persen, requesting the streamer to greet an individual named Cici, and he promptly said the name. In a separate instance, audience member @nadyaarsaa transmitted a voice message requesting a birthday prayer, to which Deankt replied with an extended discourse characterized by his distinctive humor. This amicable response reinforces the notion that streamers are genuinely "present" for their audience. This phenomena illustrates the manner in which viewers transmit donation messages, personal narratives, or sentiments, to which streamers reply with salutations, humor, and emotional encouragement on Figure 3.

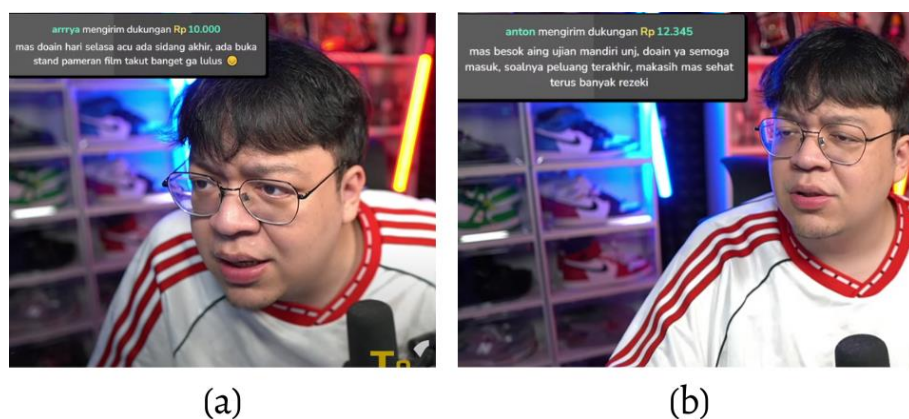


Figure 3. (a) and (b) Excerpt of audience messaging strategy through donations that attract deankt's attention

The interview results indicate that the audience perceives a sense of caring and emotional connection show in Table 1. Statements such as "I experienced immense joy

upon reading it, as if I were being recognized" and "Deankt resembles a companion." In this relationship, the viewer perceives a sense of intimacy with the streamer despite the absence of genuine reciprocal contact. This aligns with the notion of emotional work, when streamers exhibit empathy and warmth to sustain audience loyalty [17]. In addition, the use of humorous, polite, or emotional language styles and messages shows the existence of a self-presentation strategy [18]. Viewers exhibit a specific persona to capture the streamer's attention, which, within the framework of participatory culture, has evolved into a social norm in the streaming community [8].

Table 1. Interview results

No	Communication Pattern	Audience Message Form	Streamer Response	Communicative Meaning	Theoretical Connection
1	Donations as a means of recognition	Increased donation amounts accompanied by short or provocative messages	Name-mentioning, longer response, more expressive tone	Striving for social visibility and recognition	The Attention Economy
2	Requests for recognition	Requests for names, birthday greetings, or personal greetings	Name-mentioning, longer response, more expressive tone	Need for digital validation and presence	Parasocial Interactions
3	Emotional narratives	Stories about illness, loss, pregnancy, or personal issues	Empathic response, prayer, moral support	Seeking attention through emotional closeness	Streaming Culture & the Attention Economy
4	Competition for attention in chat	Repetition of messages or excessive use of capital letters	Selective response to salient messages	Seeking attention through emotional closeness	The Attention Economy

Conclusion

This study revealed that the occurrence of "digital begging" on YouTube exemplifies a novel mode of communication in the digital era. Viewers seek acknowledgment from streamers through donation messages, heartfelt communications, and personal connections. This approach encompasses social, emotional, and economic aspects. The observed communication patterns indicate a bidirectional parasocial interaction, shaped by the economics of attention and streaming culture. This pattern illustrates that attention, interaction, and emotion have emerged as the principal instruments in the contemporary digital communication landscape. The findings of this study are anticipated to provide a foundation for subsequent research concerning the dynamics of digital communication, participatory culture, and audience interaction with streaming media.

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