

The Phenomenon of Language Absorption and Word Formation Among Generation Z: A Linguistic Study on Language Use in Social Media

Iqbal Gumasa¹, Riswanto², Endang Haryanto³

email: iqbalgumasa@gmail.com

¹²³English Language Education, The State Islamic University of Fatmawati Sukarno, Bengkulu

Abstract

This study investigates lexical borrowing and word formation among Generation Z, focusing on language use across social media platforms. The study aims to analyze the processes of lexical borrowing and identify the types of word formation that emerge in digital communication among Generation Z users. Using a descriptive qualitative research design combined with content analysis and a digital ethnography approach, data were collected through online observation and digital documentation from Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), and WhatsApp. The findings indicate that Generation Z frequently incorporates English lexical items into Indonesian digital communication and creatively forms new words through processes such as borrowing, derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronyms, and neologisms. The data also demonstrate that borrowed words are commonly adapted to Indonesian linguistic structures, producing hybrid expressions that reflect linguistic creativity and the influence of digital communication. Furthermore, the widespread use of code-mixing and code-switching illustrates the dynamic interaction between English and Indonesian in online discourse, contributing to efficient, expressive, and identity-oriented communication. The study concludes that lexical borrowing and word formation are prominent features of Generation Z's communication on social media, illustrating the continuous development of language in response to technological advancement and digital culture.

Keywords: *Language Absorption, Word Formation, Generation Z, Social Media, Digital Communication, Qualitative Research*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji peminjaman leksikal dan pembentukan kata di kalangan Generasi Z, dengan fokus pada penggunaan bahasa di berbagai platform media sosial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis proses peminjaman leksikal dan mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis pembentukan kata yang muncul dalam komunikasi digital di kalangan pengguna Generasi Z. Dengan menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif deskriptif yang dipadukan dengan analisis konten dan pendekatan etnografi digital, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi daring dan dokumentasi digital dari Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), dan WhatsApp. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Generasi Z sering memasukkan unsur leksikal bahasa Inggris ke dalam komunikasi digital berbahasa Indonesia dan secara kreatif membentuk kata-kata baru melalui proses seperti peminjaman, derivasi, penggabungan, perpaduan, pemendekan, akronim, dan neologisme. Data juga menunjukkan bahwa kata-kata pinjaman umumnya diadaptasi ke dalam struktur linguistik bahasa Indonesia, menghasilkan ekspresi hibrida yang mencerminkan kreativitas linguistik dan pengaruh komunikasi digital. Selain itu, penggunaan campuran kode dan peralihan kode yang meluas menggambarkan interaksi dinamis antara bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia dalam wacana daring, yang berkontribusi pada komunikasi yang efisien, ekspresif, dan berorientasi pada identitas. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa peminjaman leksikal dan pembentukan kata merupakan ciri menonjol dalam komunikasi Generasi Z di media sosial, yang menggambarkan perkembangan bahasa yang berkelanjutan sebagai respons terhadap kemajuan teknologi dan budaya digital.

Kata Kunci: *Penyerapan Bahasa, Pembentukan Kata, Generasi Z, Media Sosial, Komunikasi Digital, Penelitian Kualitatif*

Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology in the twenty-first century has transformed almost every aspect of human life, particularly the way people communicate and use language. The widespread availability of the internet, smartphones, and social networking platforms has enabled communication to occur instantly across geographical and cultural boundaries. Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), and WhatsApp are no longer used merely as tools for exchanging information; instead, they have become dynamic spaces where individuals construct identities, share experiences, express emotions, and participate in global conversations. Among all generations, Generation Z has emerged as the most active group of digital users because they have grown up alongside digital technology and are therefore considered digital natives. Their daily interaction within online communities has encouraged the emergence of new linguistic practices characterized by creativity, flexibility, and innovation. As communication becomes increasingly informal and fast-paced, users continuously adapt language to suit digital environments by creating shorter expressions, combining linguistic elements from different languages, and introducing new lexical items. Consequently, social media has become one of the most influential environments in which language evolves, expands, and adapts to contemporary communicative needs.

The increasing use of social media has also accelerated the phenomenon of language absorption and word formation, particularly through the influence of English as the dominant language of global communication. Because most digital applications, entertainment media, technological innovations, and online communities operate primarily in English, users are constantly exposed to English vocabulary in their everyday activities. This exposure encourages speakers of other languages, including Indonesian, to adopt English lexical items into their daily communication. Many expressions such as *story*, *content*, *viral*, *follow*, *share*, *comment*, and *live* are frequently used without translation or are adapted into Indonesian linguistic structures. In addition to lexical borrowing, users actively create new words through various morphological processes, including derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronyms, and neologisms. These newly formed expressions generally reflect the characteristics of digital communication because they are concise, expressive, humorous, and efficient. As a result, online communication has become a productive environment for continuous lexical innovation, where language changes more rapidly than in conventional face-to-face interaction.

Generation Z demonstrates particularly remarkable linguistic creativity because they do not simply borrow foreign vocabulary but also modify and integrate it into Indonesian linguistic patterns. Their communication frequently combines Indonesian grammatical structures with English lexical items, producing hybrid forms such as *nge-like*, *nge-post*, *di-share*, *story-an*, and numerous other expressions that are widely recognized among young social media users. Alongside these hybrid forms, Generation Z also produces original lexical innovations such as *gabut*, *mager*, *bucin*, *santuy*, and many other neologisms that have become integral parts of everyday communication. These expressions are created not only for communicative efficiency but also to represent humor, creativity, solidarity, and social identity within digital communities. Such linguistic practices illustrate that language is not a fixed system but rather a dynamic social resource that constantly adapts to technological developments and changing patterns of interaction. Therefore, the language used by Generation Z on social media provides valuable evidence of how linguistic innovation develops naturally within contemporary digital culture. From the perspective of English Language Teaching (ELT), this phenomenon offers significant educational value because it exposes learners to authentic language as it is genuinely used in contemporary communication. Unlike traditional instructional materials that primarily emphasize formal grammar and standardized vocabulary, social media presents real examples of language variation, borrowing, code-mixing, and lexical creativity occurring in everyday interactions. Studying these linguistic phenomena enables students to develop broader vocabulary knowledge, improve their understanding of word formation processes, and strengthen their morphological awareness by recognizing how prefixes, suffixes, compounds, blends, acronyms, and borrowed words function in authentic contexts. Furthermore, the integration of authentic digital discourse into language learning supports communicative language teaching by emphasizing meaningful interaction rather than isolated grammatical rules. It also encourages learners to develop digital literacy while understanding that

language varies according to social context, communicative purpose, and cultural identity. Consequently, investigating language absorption and word formation among Generation Z not only contributes to linguistic scholarship but also provides valuable implications for English language education in responding to the realities of communication in the digital era.

The phenomenon of language absorption has attracted considerable attention from linguists because it illustrates how languages continuously influence one another through social interaction and cultural contact. Haugen (1950) classifies language absorption into three principal forms, namely loan words, loan blends, and loan translations, all of which are increasingly evident in contemporary digital communication. Loan words refer to lexical items borrowed directly from another language with little or no modification, while loan blends combine foreign lexical elements with native morphological structures. Loan translations, or calques, involve translating the meaning or structure of foreign expressions into the target language. More recent perspectives have expanded this understanding by emphasizing the close relationship between borrowing and bilingual language practices. Hennecke and Wiesinger (2023) argue that language absorption cannot always be separated clearly from code-switching because both processes rely on similar cognitive and linguistic mechanisms. Likewise, Treffers-Daller (2023) proposes the *Simple View of Borrowing and Code-Switching*, suggesting that the distinction between borrowing and code-switching depends primarily on whether a linguistic expression has become an established lexical item in the speaker's mental lexicon. These theoretical perspectives demonstrate that language absorption is not merely the transfer of vocabulary between languages but also a dynamic cognitive and sociolinguistic process influenced by globalization, multilingualism, and the rapid exchange of information in digital environments.

Alongside language absorption, word formation represents another important mechanism through which Generation Z enriches and expands its linguistic repertoire. According to Bauer (1983), Plag (2003), and Yule (2010), new lexical items may emerge through several morphological processes, including derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronym formation, and neologism. These processes have become increasingly productive on social media because digital communication encourages brevity, creativity, and expressiveness. Rather than simply adopting existing vocabulary, Generation Z frequently manipulates linguistic forms to create innovative expressions that effectively convey emotions, humor, identity, and interpersonal relationships. Many newly created words quickly become popular across different online communities before eventually entering everyday communication beyond digital platforms. The continuous emergence of hybrid expressions demonstrates that language users actively participate in shaping linguistic development according to their communicative needs and social environments. Consequently, word formation should be understood not only as a morphological process but also as evidence of the adaptability and creativity of language in responding to technological advancement and changing patterns of interaction among young people.

The rapid circulation of linguistic innovations on social media also reflects broader sociocultural processes that influence how Generation Z constructs identity and establishes relationships within digital communities. Language functions not merely as a means of transmitting information but also as a symbolic resource through which individuals express personality, creativity, social affiliation, and cultural awareness. Crystal (2001) explains that digital communication has transformed traditional patterns of language use by creating environments where linguistic experimentation occurs naturally and continuously. Similarly, Gentina (2020) argues that globalization encourages young people to integrate global linguistic resources into local communication practices, resulting in hybrid language varieties that simultaneously reflect local identity and global participation. Furthermore, Giles' (2008) Communication Accommodation Theory suggests that speakers intentionally adjust their language to align with the expectations and linguistic norms of particular social groups, thereby strengthening interpersonal relationships and gaining social acceptance. Within social media environments, this adaptive behavior can be observed through the widespread use of borrowed vocabulary, abbreviations, neologisms, and creative word formations that signal membership in online communities. These sociolinguistic perspectives indicate that the language innovations produced by Generation Z are meaningful social practices that reflect identity construction, digital participation, and the ongoing evolution of

communication in the contemporary era.

Several previous studies have investigated linguistic innovation among Generation Z in digital communication from different perspectives. Sales (2022), for instance, examined linguistic borrowing and code-switching among Cebuano Visayan-speaking Generation Z users and found that English lexical items are strategically integrated into local communication to enhance clarity, expressiveness, and identity construction. Hidayati (2022) demonstrated that TikTok provides an effective environment for language learning by increasing learners' exposure to authentic English vocabulary and communicative expressions, although appropriate guidance remains necessary to maximize its educational benefits. Saputra (2024) analyzed the use of slang language on Instagram and reported that abbreviations, shortened forms, foreign language adaptations, and playful lexical modifications have become dominant characteristics of Generation Z communication. Similarly, Putri and Rahmawati (2023) found that Indonesian Generation Z frequently combines English lexical items with Indonesian morphological structures, producing hybrid expressions that represent bilingual competence and digital identity. Zhu and Jurgens (2021) further explained that online communities accelerate the creation and dissemination of neologisms through processes such as blending, abbreviation, and semantic innovation, while Wadea (2024) emphasized that digital slang functions not only as linguistic creativity but also as a social resource for expressing humor, strengthening interpersonal relationships, and constructing collective identity. Collectively, these studies confirm that digital communication has become a productive environment for continuous language innovation and lexical development among young users.

Although these previous studies have significantly contributed to understanding language use among Generation Z, several research gaps remain. Most existing studies primarily focus on code-mixing, code-switching, digital slang, bilingual communication, or the educational use of social media. Comparatively little attention has been devoted to examining language absorption as a comprehensive linguistic phenomenon integrated with systematic word formation processes within naturally occurring digital discourse. Furthermore, many previous investigations concentrate on a single social media platform, making it difficult to compare linguistic patterns across different digital environments. Few studies comprehensively classify borrowed expressions according to established linguistic theories such as Haugen's (1950) categories of language absorption together with Bauer's (1983) and Plag's (2003) classifications of word formation. Moreover, limited research has investigated how English lexical borrowing undergoes morphological adaptation when integrated into Indonesian digital communication and how these innovations function across multiple social media platforms simultaneously. Consequently, a more comprehensive qualitative investigation is required to analyze the forms, processes, and patterns of language absorption and word formation employed by Generation Z in authentic online interactions. Such an investigation is expected to provide a richer understanding of contemporary linguistic innovation while contributing to sociolinguistic research and English language education.

Based on these considerations, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "The Phenomenon of Language Absorption and Word Formation among Generation Z: A Linguistic Study on Language Use in Social Media." This study investigates authentic linguistic data collected from Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), and WhatsApp because these platforms represent the primary digital environments where Generation Z communicates, interacts, and continuously develops innovative language practices. By applying Haugen's theory of language absorption together with Bauer's and Plag's theories of word formation within a descriptive qualitative framework supported by content analysis and digital ethnography, this study aims to identify the processes through which borrowed English lexical items are absorbed, modified, and transformed into new linguistic forms in Indonesian digital communication. In addition, the study seeks to classify the various types of word formation emerging from social media interactions and to explain the sociolinguistic factors that encourage these linguistic innovations among Generation Z users. Ultimately, the findings are expected to enrich sociolinguistic scholarship concerning language change in the digital era while also providing practical insights for English Language Teaching, particularly in understanding authentic contemporary language use and integrating digital linguistic phenomena into language learning and teaching practices.

Research Methodology

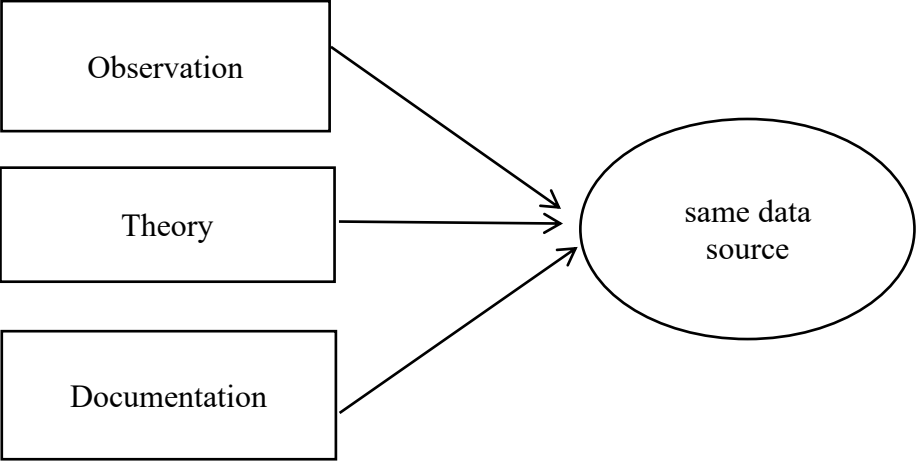
In this study, the researcher employed a descriptive qualitative research methodology combined with a content analysis method and a digital ethnography approach. A descriptive qualitative design was selected because the study aims to describe, interpret, and understand the phenomenon of language absorption and word formation as it naturally occurs in digital communication among Generation Z users. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research emphasizes the exploration of meanings, linguistic patterns, and social contexts rather than statistical measurement. Content analysis was applied to systematically identify, classify, and interpret linguistic data collected from social media platforms, while digital ethnography enabled the researcher to observe authentic language use within online communities without manipulating the research environment. According to Creswell (2016), qualitative research focuses on understanding the meanings individuals or groups attribute to social phenomena within their natural settings. Therefore, this methodological approach was considered appropriate for investigating the dynamic linguistic innovations produced by Generation Z in contemporary digital communication.

The research procedure consisted of several systematic stages, including online observation, digital documentation, data classification, interpretation, and reliability verification. The researcher collected authentic linguistic data from Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), and WhatsApp in the form of posts, captions, comments, replies, hashtags, and text-based conversations that reflected the processes of language absorption and word formation. Every relevant linguistic expression was documented through screenshots and textual records before being classified according to Haugen's (1950) theory of language absorption, including loan words, loan blends, and loan translations, as well as Bauer's (1983) and Plag's (2003) theories of word formation, including derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronyms, and neologisms. To ensure the consistency and credibility of the classification process, the researcher employed Cohen's Kappa coefficient as an inter-rater reliability measurement, allowing the agreement between independent raters to be objectively evaluated.

This study focused on describing and interpreting linguistic phenomena rather than testing causal relationships or measuring treatment effects. After the data had been classified and verified, the researcher analyzed the patterns, communicative functions, and sociocultural meanings underlying the identified linguistic forms. The analysis also examined how English lexical items were absorbed into Indonesian, how new lexical forms were created through various word formation processes, and how these innovations reflected the identity, creativity, and communication practices of Generation Z across different social media platforms. Through the integration of descriptive qualitative research, content analysis, digital ethnography, and inter-rater reliability testing, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of language absorption and word formation as naturally occurring linguistic phenomena in contemporary digital communication.

The following are the research design plans:

Figure 1
Design Plans



Description:

This mapping illustrates the triangulation technique applied in this study to ensure the credibility, consistency, and trustworthiness of the research findings. The triangulation process integrates three complementary components—observation, theory, and documentation—while referring to the same data source. Observation serves as the primary technique for collecting authentic linguistic data from Generation Z's interactions on Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), and WhatsApp. Through online participatory observation, the researcher identifies naturally occurring examples of language absorption and word formation in captions, comments, hashtags, posts, and digital conversations.

The theoretical component functions as an analytical framework for interpreting the collected linguistic data. Every identified linguistic expression is examined using relevant theories of language absorption and word formation, particularly Haugen's (1950) classification of loan words, loan blends, and loan translations, together with Bauer's (1983) and Plag's (2003) classifications of derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronym formation, and neologism. The use of theory ensures that the identification and classification of linguistic phenomena are conducted systematically and consistently according to established linguistic principles.

Documentation complements the observation process by providing permanent evidence that supports the primary data. In this study, documentation consists of screenshots of social media posts, chat excerpts, digital archives, online articles, and other supporting materials related to Generation Z's language use. These documents are used to verify observational findings, maintain data authenticity, and facilitate further analysis. The combination of observation, theory, and documentation from the same data source enables the researcher to cross-check information, minimize subjective interpretation, and strengthen the validity and reliability of the research findings through triangulation.

Research Data Source

The data sources used in this study consisted of authentic linguistic materials produced by Generation Z users on social media platforms. According to Ajayi (2023), primary data are first-hand information collected directly by the researcher from the original source. In this study, the primary data comprised naturally occurring linguistic expressions found on Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), and WhatsApp. These data included posts, captions, comments, replies, hashtags, stories, and text-based messages containing phenomena of language absorption and word formation. The researcher selected these platforms because they represent the most widely used digital communication environments among Generation Z, where language innovation frequently occurs. The linguistic data were collected through online observation and documentation, focusing on authentic examples of loan words, loan blends, loan translations, derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronyms, and neologisms. The collected data were then systematically classified and analyzed based on the theories of Haugen (1950), Bauer (1983), and Plag (2003). The use of authentic social media discourse as the primary data source ensured that the findings accurately reflected the natural language practices of Generation Z in contemporary digital communication.

Instrument

In qualitative research, the primary research instrument is the researcher, who is responsible for collecting, selecting, interpreting, and analyzing the data throughout the research process. According to Creswell (2016), qualitative researchers function as the main instrument because they directly interact with the research setting and interpret the meaning of naturally occurring phenomena. Similarly, Moleong (2018) states that the researcher serves as the key instrument in qualitative studies, possessing the ability to adapt to changing research situations, identify relevant data, and interpret findings comprehensively. In this study, the researcher systematically observed digital communication among Generation Z users, identified linguistic expressions related to language absorption and word formation, classified the data according to established linguistic theories, and interpreted the findings within their sociolinguistic context.

To support the data collection and analysis process, several research instruments were employed. The primary supporting instrument was a linguistic classification sheet designed to categorize the collected data based on Haugen's (1950) theory of language absorption and Bauer's (1983) and Plag's (2003) theories of word formation. The classification sheet consisted of coding categories, including Loan Words (LW), Loan Blends (LB), Loan Translations (LT), Derivation (DER), Compounding (COM), Blending (BLE), Clipping (CLI), Acronyms (ACR), and Neologisms (NEO). Each linguistic expression collected from Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), and WhatsApp was systematically documented, coded, and classified according to these categories to ensure consistency and facilitate qualitative analysis.

In addition, an inter-rater validation sheet was employed to assess the reliability of the classification process. The researcher collaborated with an independent rater who evaluated the linguistic data using the same classification criteria. The level of agreement between the researcher and the rater was measured using Cohen's Kappa coefficient, which is widely recognized as an appropriate statistical measure for assessing inter-rater reliability in categorical data. The obtained agreement indicated that the classification process achieved a high level of consistency and reliability, demonstrating that the research instrument produced trustworthy and dependable findings. Therefore, the combination of the researcher as the primary instrument, the linguistic classification sheet, and the inter-rater validation sheet ensured that the data collection and analysis procedures were conducted systematically, consistently, and in accordance with qualitative research standards.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically organizing, interpreting, and drawing conclusions from the collected data. According to Creswell (2016), qualitative data analysis involves preparing and organizing the data, coding the data, identifying categories or themes, interpreting the meaning of the data, and presenting the findings. In this study, the data analysis process was conducted after collecting linguistic data from social media platforms, including Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), and WhatsApp. The data analysis technique used in this study was descriptive qualitative analysis with a content analysis approach. The researcher analyzed digital language data in the form of captions, comments, posts, and messages produced by Generation Z users on social media. The collected data were identified, classified, and interpreted based on the theories of language absorption proposed by Haugen (1950) and word formation theory proposed by Bauer (1983). The data analysis process consisted of several stages. First, the researcher collected and documented linguistic data found on selected social media platforms. Second, the researcher identified the borrowed words and newly formed words used by Generation Z. The identified data were then classified into categories of language absorption, including Loan Words (LW), Loan Blends (LB), and Loan Translations (LT), as well as word formation processes, including Derivation (DER), Compounding (COM), Blending (BLE), Clipping (CLI), Acronyms (ACR), and Neologisms (NEO).

After the classification process, the researcher analyzed the linguistic features, meanings, and functions of each identified word or expression based on its context of use in digital communication. The researcher also examined how these language forms represented creativity and innovation in Generation Z's communication on social media. To ensure the reliability of the data classification, this study applied Cohen's Kappa coefficient (Cohen, 1960) as an inter-rater agreement measurement. The classification results conducted by the researcher were compared with the evaluation from the second rater to determine the consistency and accuracy of the data analysis. The obtained agreement score indicated the reliability level of the classification process. Finally, the analyzed data were presented descriptively through tables and explanations. The tables contained information about the identified linguistic forms, classification codes, meanings, examples of usage, sources of data, and their communicative functions. Through this process, the researcher was able to describe the phenomenon of language absorption and word formation among Generation Z in social media communication.

This section presents the findings obtained from the analysis of linguistic data collected from Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), and WhatsApp. The data consisted of captions, comments, posts, and messages produced by Generation Z users. The findings were categorized into two main focuses: (1) language absorption processes and (2) word formation processes. The researcher identified and classified

the data based on Haugen's (1950) theory of language borrowing and Bauer's (1983) theory of word formation. Each linguistic phenomenon was coded according to its category, including Loan Words (LW), Loan Blends (LB), Loan Translations (LT), Derivation (DER), Compounding (COM), Blending (BLE), Clipping (CLI), Acronyms (ACR), and Neologisms (NEO). The findings reveal that Generation Z actively incorporates English lexical items into Indonesian while simultaneously creating innovative lexical forms to support communication in digital environments. The analysis shows that loan words constitute the most dominant language absorption process, whereas derivation is the most frequently identified type of word formation. These linguistic patterns demonstrate the influence of globalization, technological development, and social media culture on the evolution of contemporary language, highlighting Generation Z's creativity in adapting and expanding vocabulary to achieve efficient, expressive, and socially meaningful communication.

Table 1
Loan Words (LW) Found in Generation Z Social Media Communication.

No	Data	Meaning	Context	Source
1	Healing	Relaxation or recovery activity	Self-care expression	Instagram
2	Outfit	Clothing style	Fashion discussion	TikTok
3	Update	Latest Information	Digital communication	WhatsApp
4	Viral	Widely popular content	Trending topic	X
5	Download	Taking digital files	Academic communication	WhatsApp

Table 2
Loan Blends (LB) Found in Generation Z Social Media Communication.

No	Data	Meaning	Context	Source
1	Nge-post	Posting Content	Uploading social media content	Instagram
2	Nge-like	Giving Likes	Social media interaction	Instagram
3	Di-follow	Followed by someone	Online Relationship	TikTok
4	Nge-share	Sharing information	Digital communication	WhatsApp
5	Nge-print	Printing documents	Academic activity	WhatsApp

Table 3
Loan Translation (LT) Found in Generation Z Social Media Communication.

No	Data	Meaning	Context	Source
1	Waktu berkualitas	Quality time	Meaningful time together	Instagram
2	Teman dekat	Close friend	Close relationship	Instagram
3	Berfikir positif	Positif thinking	Optimistic	Instagram
4	Tekanan sosial	Social pressure	Social influence problem	X
5	Daftar tugas	To-do list	Task planning	WhatsApp

The second finding focuses on word formation processes found in Generation Z's social media communication. The researcher identified several forms of word creation that demonstrate linguistic creativity among Generation Z. The identified categories include derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronym, and neologism.

Table 4
Derivation (Der) Found in Generation Z Social Media Communication.

No	Data	Process	Meaning	Source
1	Productive	Product + ive	Being productive	Instagram
2	Creative	Create + ive	Having creativity	TikTok
3	usage	usage	The act of using	WhatsApp

4	follower	Follow + er	Social media audience	Instagram
5	digital	Digit + al	Related to technology	X

Table 5

Compounding (Com) Found in Generation Z Social Media Communication.

No	Data	Combination	Meaning	Source
1	beauty vlog	Beauty + vlog	Fashion video conten	TikTok
2	content creator	Content + creator	Digital content maker	Instagram
3	online class	Online + class	Internet-based learning	WhatsApp
4	daily vlog	Daily + vlog	Daily video documentation	TikTok
5	fan account	Fan + account	Supporter account	X

Table 6

Blending (Ble) Found in Generation Z Social Media Communication.

No	Data	Formation	Meaning	Source
1	netizen	Internet + citizen	Internet users	X
2	influencer	Influence + e	Digital opinion leader	Instagram
3	vlogger	Video + blogger	Digital opinion leader	TikTok
4	edutainment	Education + entertainment	Educational entertainment	TikTok
5	workaholic	Work + alcoholic	Person addicted to work	X

Table 7

Clipping (Cli) Found in Generation Z Social Media Communication.

No	Data	Original form	Meaning	Source
1	information	info	Informasi	TikTok
2	administrator	admin	Pemilik Akun	Instagram
3	application	app	Perangkat lunak	WhatsApp
4	biography	bio	Daftar singkat Riwayat hidup	TikTok
5	installation	install	Memasang	X

Table 8

Acronyms (Acr) Found in Generation Z Social Media Communication.

No	Data	Full form	Meaning	Source
1	FYP	For You Page	TikTok recommendation page	TikTok
2	POV	Point of View	Personal perspective	Instagram
3	BTW	By The Way	Changing topic	Instagram
4	LOL	Laugh Out Loud	Expression of laughter	X
5	OOTD	Outfit Of The Day	Daily clothing style	WhatsApp

Table 9

Neologisms (Neo) Found in Generation Z Social Media Communication.

No	Data	Meaning	Context	Source
1	aesthetic	Having artistic style	Lifestyle expression	Instagram
2	relate	Feeling connected	Personal expression	TikTok
3	spill	Reveal information	Online interaction	Instagram
4	salfok	Wrong focus	Informal expression	X
5	random	Unexpected content	Digital culture	Instagram

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that Generation Z's language use on social media reflects a dynamic interaction between Indonesian and English. The presence of borrowed words and newly formed expressions demonstrates that social media has become an important environment for language development. Through platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), and WhatsApp, Generation Z is continuously exposed to English vocabulary and digital communication styles, which influence their daily language practices. Regarding the language absorption process, the findings show that Generation Z uses three main forms of borrowing: loan words, loan blends, and loan translations. Loan words represent the direct adoption of English vocabulary without major modification, such as *healing*, *outfit*, *update*, and *viral*. These words are frequently used because they are closely associated with modern lifestyle, technology, and online culture. This finding supports Haugen's (1950) concept that language borrowing occurs when speakers adopt elements from another language due to continuous language contact.

The occurrence of loan blends shows that borrowed English words are not always adopted completely but can be adapted according to Indonesian grammatical patterns. Forms such as *nge-post*, *nge-like*, and *nge-share* demonstrate that Generation Z combines English lexical items with Indonesian affixes to create expressions that feel more natural in local communication. This process indicates that language users are not passive receivers of foreign vocabulary but actively modify borrowed forms based on their linguistic needs. Furthermore, the findings related to word formation processes reveal that Generation Z demonstrates high linguistic creativity in producing and spreading new expressions. Derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronym formation, and neologism processes show that digital communication encourages shorter, more expressive, and more flexible language forms. Expressions such as *content creator*, *FYP*, *OOTD*, and *spill* illustrate how digital communities create new vocabulary to represent emerging concepts and online experiences.

The findings are also consistent with Bauer's (1983) theory that word formation is a productive linguistic process through which speakers create new lexical items. Social media accelerates this process because users interact quickly, share trends, and adopt popular expressions across different digital communities. As a result, Generation Z contributes significantly to the expansion of contemporary vocabulary. The reliability of the classification process in this study was strengthened through Cohen's Kappa (1960) analysis. The agreement between the researcher and the second rater indicates that the categorization of language absorption and word formation data was conducted consistently. This supports the credibility of the qualitative analysis process, as suggested by Creswell (2016), where systematic coding and verification are essential in qualitative research. Overall, the findings demonstrate that Generation Z's language practices on social media represent a combination of language adaptation and linguistic innovation. English borrowing and creative word formation are not merely influenced by globalization but also reflect how young users construct meaning, identity, and communication styles in digital environments.

Conclusion

This study concludes that Generation Z's language use on social media reflects the dynamic interaction between English and Indonesian through language absorption and word formation processes. Based on the findings, the researcher identified three types of language absorption, namely Loan Words (LW), Loan Blends (LB), and Loan Translations (LT), as well as six word formation processes, including Derivation (DER), Compounding (COM), Blending (BLE), Clipping (CLI), Acronyms (ACR), and Neologisms (NEO). These findings show that Generation Z does not only adopt English expressions but also actively adapts and creates new linguistic forms according to their communication needs in digital environments. The results indicate that social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), and WhatsApp contribute to the development and spread of new language forms among Generation Z. Through descriptive qualitative analysis and content analysis, supported by Cohen's Kappa reliability measurement, this study demonstrates that digital communication has become an important space for linguistic creativity and language change.

Suggestion

Based on the findings of this study, future researchers are suggested to explore language absorption and word formation phenomena using a wider range of data sources, longer observation

periods, and different research approaches to obtain more comprehensive results. Further studies may also examine other digital platforms and communication contexts to understand the continuous development of language in online environments. For English language learners and educators, this study suggests that understanding digital language variation is important because social media has influenced contemporary language use. However, users should maintain awareness of the differences between informal digital expressions and formal language contexts to ensure effective and appropriate communication.

References

- Aprilia, F., Neisya, & Sonia, F. (2023). Word formation process in Adele's "30" song album: A comprehensive morphological analysis. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 9(1), 125–134. <https://doi.org/10.55637/jr.9.1.5775.125-134>
- Azizi, M. R. (2024). *An Analysis of English Classroom Interactions : Teacher Talk , Students ' Responses , and Students ' Opinions An Analysis of English Classroom Interactions : Teacher Talk , Students ' Responses , and Students ' Opinions Introduction*. 595–613.
- Bauer, L. (1983). *English word-formation*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139165846>
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (2nd ed.). Longman..
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (2nd ed.). Longman.
- Evenddy, S. S., Education, E. L., Sultan, U., & Tirtayasa, A. (2021). 1 , 2 , 3. 8(1), 1–14
- Cohen, J. (1960). A coefficient of agreement for nominal scales. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 20(1), 37–46. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001316446002000104>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Evenddy, S. S., Education, E. L., Sultan, U., & Tirtayasa, A. (2021). 1 , 2 , 3. 8(1), 1–14.
- Crystal, D. (2001). *Language and the Internet*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139164771>
- Gentina, É. (2020). Generation Z in Asia: A research agenda. Dalam É. Gentina & E. Parry (Eds.), *The new Generation Z in Asia: Dynamics, differences, digitalisation* (hlm. 3–19). Emerald Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80043-220-820201002>
- Giles, H. (2008). Communication accommodation theory. Dalam L. A. Baxter & D. O. Braithwaite (Eds.), *Engaging theories in interpersonal communication: Multiple perspectives* (hlm. 161–173). SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483329529.n12>
- Haugen, E. (1950). The analysis of linguistic borrowing. *Language*, 26(2), 210–231. <https://doi.org/10.2307/410058>
- Hockett, C. F. (1958). *A course in modern linguistics*. Macmillan.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2016). *Designing qualitative research* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications. 4(September), 26–37.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Nashrudin, N., Rahmawati, A., & Kurniawan, I. (2021). Word formation processes in social media terminology. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literacy*, 5(2), 112–124. <https://doi.org/10.25134/jall.v5i2.4123>
- Plag, I. (2003). *Word-formation in English*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511841323>
- Treffers-Daller, J. (2023). The simple view of borrowing and code-switching. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 27(6), 841–858. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069231168535>
- Zhu, J., & Jurgens, D. (2021). Idiolects in the wild: Understanding the stability and variation of individual language use in online communities. Dalam *Proceedings of the 59th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics and the 11th International Joint Conference on Natural Language Processing (Volume 1: Long Papers)* (hlm. 4816–4830). Association for Computational Linguistics. <https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/2021.acl-long.373>