Editor : Dr. Baiatun Nisa, M.Pd.

SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE VARIATION IN MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES

Penulis :

Prapti Wigati Purwaningrum | Retno Dwigustini | Retno Wulan
Iin Baroroh Ma'arif | Afdaleni | Paramita Kusumawardhani | Yetty
Ria Saraswati | Siti Kustini | Sitti Agustina | Loso Judijanto
Ledy Nurlely | Nurhayati S. | Dwi Indarti

Hello
안녕하세요
Hola
你好
Bonjour
नमस्ते

SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE VARIATION IN MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES

UU No 28 tahun 2014 tentang Hak Cipta

Fungsi dan sifat hak cipta Pasal 4
Hak Cipta sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 3 huruf a merupakan hak eksklusif yang terdiri atas hak moral dan hak ekonomi.

Pembatasan Pelindungan Pasal 26
Ketentuan sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 23, Pasal 24, dan Pasal 25 tidak berlaku terhadap:

i. Penggunaan kutipan singkat Ciptaan dan/atau produk Hak Terkait untuk pelaporan peristiwa aktual yang ditujukan hanya untuk keperluan penyediaan informasi aktual;
ii. Penggandaan Ciptaan dan/atau produk Hak Terkait hanya untuk kepentingan penelitian ilmu pengetahuan;
iii. Penggandaan Ciptaan dan/atau produk Hak Terkait hanya untuk keperluan pengajaran, kecuali pertunjukan dan Fonogram yang telah dilakukan Pengumuman sebagai bahan ajar; dan
iv. Penggunaan untuk kepentingan pendidikan dan pengembangan ilmu pengetahuan yang memungkinkan suatu Ciptaan dan/atau produk Hak Terkait dapat digunakan tanpa izin Pelaku Pertunjukan, Produser Fonogram, atau Lembaga Penyiaran.

Sanksi Pelanggaran Pasal 113

1. Setiap Orang yang dengan tanpa hak melakukan pelanggaran hak ekonomi sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 9 ayat (1) huruf i untuk Penggunaan Secara Komersial dipidana dengan pidana penjara paling lama 1 (satu) tahun dan/atau pidana denda paling banyak Rp100.000.000 (seratus juta rupiah).
2. Setiap Orang yang dengan tanpa hak dan/atau tanpa izin Pencipta atau pemegang Hak Cipta melakukan pelanggaran hak ekonomi Pencipta sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 9 ayat (1) huruf c, huruf d, huruf f, dan/atau huruf h untuk Penggunaan Secara Komersial dipidana dengan pidana penjara paling lama 3 (tiga) tahun dan/atau pidana denda paling banyak Rp500.000.000,00 (lima ratus juta rupiah).

SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE VARIATION IN MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES

Authors:

Prapti Wigati Purwaningrum
Retno Dwigustini
Retno Wulan
Iin Baroroh Ma'arif
Afdaleni
Paramita Kusumawardhani
Yetty
Ria Saraswati
Siti Kustini
Sitti Agustina
Loso Judijanto
Ledy Nurlely
Nurhayati S.
Dwi Indarti

Editor:

Dr. Baiatun Nisa, M.Pd.

SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE VARIATION IN MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES

Authors:

Prapti Wigati Purwaningrum
Retno Dwigustini
Retno Wulan
Iin Baroroh Ma'arif
Afdaleni
Paramita Kusumawardhani
Yetty
Ria Saraswati
Siti Kustini
Sitti Agustina
Loso Judijanto
Ledy Nurlely
Nurhayati S.
Dwi Indarti

Editor: **Dr. Baiatun Nisa, M.Pd.**

Cover Design: **Nada Kurnia, S.I.Kom.**

Layout: **Samuel, S.Kom.**

Size: **A5 Unesco (15,5 x 23 cm)**

Page: x**iv, 272**

e-ISBN: **978-634-7592-14-9**

Publish On: **April 2026**

Copyright 2025, by the Author

Content outside the responsibility of the printing company

Copyright © 2025 by Future Science Publisher
All Right Reserved

Copyright protected by law
It is strictly prohibited to translate,
photocopy, or reproduce part or all of the contents of this book
without written permission from the publisher

PENERBIT FUTURE SCIENCE
(CV. FUTURE SCIENCE)
IKAPI Member (348/JTI/2022)

Perum Sarimadu II B3 No.09 Pakisaji, Kab. Malang,
Jawa Timur, Indonesia 65162
www.futuresciencepress.com

PREFACE

Language is not only a tool for communication but also a powerful reflection of identity, culture, and social relationships. In an era shaped by globalization, digital communication, and increasing human mobility, multilingualism has become a defining feature of contemporary societies. Within these complex linguistic landscapes, language variation emerges as a natural and meaningful expression of social life.

Sociolinguistics and Language Variation in Multilingual Societies is designed to provide students, educators, and researchers with a comprehensive and accessible understanding of how language functions in socially and linguistically diverse contexts. The development of this book was motivated by the growing need for resources that connect foundational sociolinguistic theory with real-world multilingual practices across educational, professional, and digital environments.

This book brings together theoretical perspectives and contextual case studies from a range of multilingual settings. The chapters explore how individuals negotiate linguistic choices that signal identity, belonging, power, and cultural values in schools, workplaces, online platforms, and community spaces. By integrating theory with practical examples and reflective discussions, the book aims to bridge the gap between abstract sociolinguistic concepts and everyday language use.

The book's structure guides readers progressively from core sociolinguistic principles to emerging topics such as digital communication and future linguistic challenges. Each chapter is

written to support both conceptual understanding and practical application.

It is hoped that this book will contribute to ongoing scholarly conversations on linguistic diversity and inspire readers to approach multilingualism with curiosity, critical awareness, and appreciation for the rich linguistic realities that shape human interaction today. The editor would like to express sincere gratitude to all contributing authors, colleagues, reviewers, the publisher, and family members whose support, collaboration, and encouragement made the completion of this book possible.

Malang, February 2026

Editor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE v

TABLE OF CONTENTS vii

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND MULTILINGUALISM 1

Prapti Wigati Purwaningrum 1

INTRODUCTION 1

LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY: BASIC RELATIONSHIPS 2

WHAT SOCIOLINGUISTICS STUDIES: SCOPE AND FOCUS 3

LANGUAGE VARIATION AS A SOCIAL PRACTICE 5

MULTILINGUALISM IN EVERYDAY CONTEXTS 6

IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING LANGUAGE IN MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES 9

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES 10

CONCLUSION 13

CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF LANGUAGE VARIATION 17

Retno Dwigustini 17

INTRODUCTION 17

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS 19

VARIATIONIST APPROACHES (LABOV AND SUCCESSORS) 21
STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVES 24
INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS INFLUENCING VARIATION 26
LANGUAGE CHANGE AND DIFFUSION IN COMMUNITIES 29
CONCLUSION 31
CHAPTER 3 SOCIAL FACTORS IN LANGUAGE VARIATION 37
Retno Wulan 37
INTRODUCTION 37
SOCIAL CLASS AND LINGUISTIC STRATIFICATION 38
GENDER AND LANGUAGE USE PATTERNS 40
AGE AND GENERATIONAL LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES 41
ETHNICITY, IDENTITY, AND SPEECH NORMS 43
URBAN AND RURAL LINGUISTIC DIFFERENTIATION 45
CONCLUSION 46
CHAPTER 4 CONTEXT AND SITUATIONAL LANGUAGE USE 55
Iin Baroroh Ma’arif 55
INTRODUCTION 55
CONCEPTUALIZING CONTEXT IN LANGUAGE USE 56

SITUATIONAL FACTORS SHAPING LANGUAGE USE 64

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CONTEXTUAL LANGUAGE USE 66

CONTEXT IN DIGITAL COMMUNICATION ... 68

CONTEXT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING 69

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AND EMERGING TRENDS 70

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE 72

CONCLUSION 74

CHAPTER 5 PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONETIC VARIATIONS 77

Afdaleni 77

INTRODUCTION 77

PHONOLOGICAL VARIATIONS 79

PHONOLOGICAL PROCESS OF THE CHANGES OF SOUND 81

PHONETIC VARIATIONS 82

FACTORS INFLUENCING PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONETIC VARIATIONS IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS 84

PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONETICS VARIATIONS IN MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES 87

IMPLICATIONS OF PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONETIC VARIATIONS 91

CONCLUSION 92

SUGGESTION 93

CHAPTER 6 LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL VARIATION 97
Paramita Kusumawardhani 97
INTRODUCTION 97
VOCABULARY AND REGIONAL IDENTITY 100
BORROWING, LOANWORDS, AND SEMANTIC SHIFT 102
DIALECT GRAMMAR AND STRUCTURAL DIFFERENCES 104
CONTACT-INDUCED GRAMMATICAL CHANGE 105
SLANG, YOUTH LANGUAGE, AND POPULAR EXPRESSIONS 107
CONCLUSION 109
CHAPTER 7 BILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM COMPETENCE 115
Yetty 115
INTRODUCTION 115
FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF BILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM . 116
LANGUAGE COMPETENCE FROM A LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE 119
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE AND THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE 120
BILINGUAL COMPETENCE 121
MULTILINGUAL COMPETENCE AND LINGUISTIC REPERTOIRE 122
MULTILINGUAL COMPETENCE AND SOCIAL IDENTITY 123

BILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM IN EDUCATION 124
INDONESIA AS A MULTILINGUAL SOCIETY 124
CONCLUSION 125
CHAPTER 8 CODE-SWITCHING AND CODE-MIXING 131
Ria Saraswati 131
INTRODUCTION 131
DEFINING CODE-SWITCHING AND CODE-MIXING 134
STRUCTURAL MODELS (E.G., MATRIX LANGUAGE FRAMEWORK) 136
SOCIAL MEANINGS OF LANGUAGE ALTERNATION 138
IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION AND AUDIENCE AWARENESS 140
ANALYZING REAL CONVERSATIONAL DATA 141
CONCLUSION 143
CHAPTER 9 LANGUAGE ATTITUDES AND IDEOLOGIES 151
Siti Kustini 151
INTRODUCTION 151
LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND THEIR SOCIAL EFFECTS 152
PRESTIGE AND STIGMATIZED VARIETIES 154
LINGUISTIC PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION 156

RESEARCH METHODS: SURVEYS AND MATCHED-GUISE TESTS ... 158
CASE STUDIES IN LANGUAGE ATTITUDES AND LANGUAGE SHIFT ... 163
CONCLUSION ... 166
CHAPTER 10 LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND IDENTITY ... 173
Sitti Agustina ... 173
INTRODUCTION ... 173
LANGUAGE AS CULTURAL SYMBOL ... 174
ETHNOLINGUISTIC IDENTITY AND GROUP BOUNDARIES ... 177
HERITAGE LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND TRANSMISSION ... 179
YOUTH CULTURE, STYLE, AND IDENTITY PERFORMANCE ... 182
CULTURAL AUTHENTICITY AND BELONGING ... 184
CONCLUSION ... 186
CHAPTER 11 LANGUAGE POLICY AND PLANNING ... 191
Loso Judijanto ... 191
INTRODUCTION ... 191
PRINCIPLES OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ... 194
STATUS, CORPUS, AND ACQUISITION PLANNING ... 197
NATIONAL LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ... 200

BILINGUAL/MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION MODELS 202
LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION AND ENDANGERED LANGUAGES 203
CONCLUSION 205
CHAPTER 12 RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS 215
Ledy Nurlely 215
INTRODUCTION 215
RESEARCH PARADIGMS IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS 216
RESEARCH DESIGN IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS STUDIES 218
DATA TYPES AND SOURCES 219
DATA COLLECTION METHODS 222
CORPUS-BASED AND DIGITAL DATA COLLECTION 226
DATA TRANSCRIPTION, CODING, AND ANALYSIS 228
CONCLUSION 231
CHAPTER 13 DIGITAL LANGUAGE VARIATION 239
Nurhayati S. 239
INTRODUCTION 239
DEFINING DIGITAL LANGUAGE VARIATION 242
CONCEPTS IN DIGITAL SOCIOLINGUISTICS 243

TRADITIONAL VS. DIGITAL LANGUAGE VARIATION 244
KEY CMC THEORIES 246
MECHANISMS OF DIGITAL VARIATION 248
PRINCIPAL FORMS OF DIGITAL LANGUAGE VARIATION 248
PLATFORM AND COMMUNITY CASE STUDIES (EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS) 249
SOCIOLINGUISTIC AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS 250
CONCLUSION 251

CHAPTER 14 FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES 257
Dwi Indarti 257
INTRODUCTION 257
GLOBALIZATION, MIGRATION, AND NEW LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPES 259
TECHNOLOGY, AI, AND AUTOMATED LANGUAGE VARIATIONS 261
THE FUTURE OF MINORITY AND INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES 264
SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY 266
INTEGRATING THEORY AND PRACTICE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH 268
CONCLUSION 269

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND MULTILINGUALISM

Prapti Wigati Purwaningrum
Universitas Bina Sarana informatika, Jakarta
E-mail: prapti.pwp@bsi.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between language and society. This study views language as a social phenomenon related to the context of use and social structure. (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021) state that language variation arises as a result of differences in social factors including class, age, gender, and communication situations, so that speakers' choices in their speech represent social class and power relations. The next opinion, expressed by (Holmes and Wilson, 2022), is that language functions as a means of identity formation, especially in modern societies that use more than one language. In this context, multilingualism is understood as the practice of using more than one language that is dynamic and contextual, both in face-to-face and virtual spaces. (García et al., 2021) view multilingualism as the utilization of linguistic repertoires used by speakers to construct meaning and identity across languages. This practice becomes complex when language choices are influenced by specific audiences and ideologies, particularly in digital and multimodal communication (Zhao & Zappavigna, 2022). Therefore, sociolinguistics and multilingualism can be considered frameworks for understanding language as an adaptive, identity-

based social practice that continues to evolve in contemporary society.

LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY: BASIC RELATIONSHIPS

Language and Society examine the fundamental relationship between language and society by positioning language as a social practice that is always influenced by cultural context, social structure, and the situations in which it is used. For example, the existence of language variations in dialect, vocabulary, and language structure are influenced by geographic location (Trudgill, 2020). Meanwhile, social variation, or sociolect, is influenced by social, educational, and economic factors, namely when certain language forms are associated with the status of the speaker and the audience (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021). At the individual level, idiolect reflects a person's unique language habits. Furthermore, language use is also influenced by the context or domain that produce professional registers and jargon, such as in certain fields (Holmes and Wilson, 2022) In this case, speakers usually adjust their language style according to the level of formality and audience. Furthermore, phonological variation is evident in accents that are characteristic of the speaker's region of origin or particular social identity.

Thus, in multilingual societies, code-switching and code-mixing become a means of compromising identity, solidarity, and social function in both offline and online interactions (Fishman, 1972 ;Gumperz, 2009). Furthermore, the phenomenon of diglossia is still found, that is a situation in which two or more language varieties are used in a single society. In a social context, the use of these languages is divided based on their functions, namely, high and low varieties (Holmes and Wilson, 2022). Furthermore, when speakers of different languages interact, it produces the phenomena of

borrowing, pidgin, and creole. This indicates the evolution of language as a result of social interaction (Mesthrie, 2009). Thus, language variation is understood as a representation of social structure, identity, and communication dynamics in contemporary society.

WHAT SOCIOLINGUISTICS STUDIES: SCOPE AND FOCUS

The relationship between language, culture, and identity is a focus of discussion in sociolinguistics because all three influence each other in everyday social practices. Language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a representation of the cultural values and social identities of its speakers. (Sapir, 1921) initial idea that language serves as a guide to social reality, as well as (Whorf, 1956) view of the relationship between language and cultural mindsets, remain relevant in modern studies that emphasize language as a dynamic form of social practice. Current research shows that social identities such as class, gender, ethnicity, and group are not fixed, but are formed and negotiated through language choices, dialects, and speech styles in everyday interactions (Holmes and Wilson, 2022). In multilingual societies, linguistic practices such as code-switching and code-mixing enable speakers to display multiple identities according to the social context, participants or audiences, and communication goals Recent relevant studies also emphasize that language plays a crucial role in maintaining culture and unity amidst globalization and linguistic dominance (García et al., 2021). In the Indonesian context, the use of regional languages can mark ethnic identity and cultural relations, while the use of Indonesian serves as a symbol of national identity. Thus, language is the primary medium for representing culture, identity, and linguistic

identity formation in a modern, multilingual and multicultural society.

Language use in society is closely related to the context and communication situation since the meaning of speech is determined not only by lexical and grammatical elements, but also by the social situation, the relationship between the speaker and the listener, the purpose of the interaction, and the norms prevailing in the interaction. In the context of contemporary sociolinguistics and pragmatics studies, context includes the identity of the speaker and the listener, the background of place and time, the type of communication, and the power relations between them (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021; Holmes and Wilson, 2022). These differences influence the choice of speech style and speaking strategy. For example, speakers prefer to use more formal speech when addressing superiors in certain situations. Meanwhile, a more casual speech style is usually used in interactions with peers or lower-level conversation partners. Communication situations demand different grammatical adjustments, including in the use of vocabulary, sentence structure, and pragmatic markers. Thus, Halliday's concepts of field, tenor, and mode remain relevant today. This is reinforced by a recent study that these three elements also apply to digital and multimodal communication (Zhao & Zappavigna, 2022). In certain contexts, the same utterance can be interpreted differently when used in different contexts. For example, the sentence "Could you please pay attention to me for a moment?" implies a request in a formal meeting, but seems inappropriate in informal conversations, such as with friends. Therefore, everything depends on the social relationship, intonation, and the speaker's purpose in that context. Understanding the situational context is crucial for interpreting the meaning of the utterance correctly and effectively, in accordance with prevailing social rules.

LANGUAGE VARIATION AS A SOCIAL PRACTICE

Phonological and phonetic variation refer to differences in pronunciation of language sounds that arise among speakers and listeners, influenced by region, social class, age, and ethnicity. Phonetic variation relates to differences in sounds, including intonation, stress, and articulation. Meanwhile, phonological variation relates to differences in the sound and phonemic systems used in certain language dialects. In contemporary sociolinguistic studies, sound variation can identify geographic origin, group affiliation, and speaker identity (Eckert, 2019; Mesthrie, 2009. (Labove, 1972) Findings on the link between sound variation and social structure remain relevant in the current context. This is further reinforced by recent research showing that phonological choices reflect speakers' social orientation and social interactions (Tagliamonte, 2006). For example, differences in pronunciation of the phoneme /r/ in British and American English indicate phonological variation, while differences in the length of certain vowels indicate phonetic variation. Additionally, in bilingual and multilingual communities, phonological and phonetic variations are often influenced by language contact, which can produce accents that are distinctive from other languages.

Lexical and grammatical variation refers to differences in vocabulary and grammar used by speakers in different language groups. This type of variation typically arises when a single concept is represented by different terms based on region, social group, cultural identity, or communication situation. For example, in Indonesian, the use of the words *ayah* (father), *bapak* (father), *papi* (father), and *abi* (father) represents lexical variation influenced by the speaker's cultural background, religion, and lifestyle. Meanwhile, differences in terms such as *nasi goreng* (fried rice), *nasgor* (slang for fried rice), and *sego goreng* (Javanese for fried rice) demonstrate the link between

vocabulary and regional and social identity. When a speaker says "*sego goreng*," it can immediately be identified that the speaker is most likely Javanese. Similarly, the term "*nasgor*," although commonly used today, is synonymous with slang, commonly used by young people. Grammatical variation, on the other hand, relates to differences in sentence structure, word order, and morphological forms that vary across dialects and registers. For example, to mark differences in formality and context of use, in the Betawi dialect, "*gue mau pergi*" (I wanna go) differs from the standard form "*saya ingin pergi*" (I want to go), which represents socially and situationally based grammatical variation. Recent research confirms that lexical and grammatical variation are the result of social, historical, and cultural interactions that shape linguistic practices within a community (Trudgill, 2020; Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021). For example, in the Indonesian context, this variation is increasingly complex due to the influence of regional languages, foreign languages, and the development of youth and digital languages (Holmes and Wilson, 2022). Thus, the study of lexical and grammatical variation provides a deeper understanding of how social identities, power relations, and communication contexts significantly influence language choices in everyday life.

MULTILINGUALISM IN EVERYDAY CONTEXTS

Multilingual competence refers to the ability of an individual or community to use two or more languages, both functionally and contextually, in everyday life. This competence encompasses not only vocabulary and grammar mastery but also out-of-context knowledge of when, where, and with whom the language is used, in accordance with social and cultural norms. The concept of communicative competence, introduced by Hymes (1971), remains relevant in contemporary studies, such as the social, ideological, and identity dimensions of

multilingualism (García et al., 2021). In multilingual societies, speakers dynamically use Indonesian, regional languages, and foreign languages in specific domains, as previously discussed by Fishman (1972). Code-switching and code-mixing practices can be used as primary indicators because they demonstrate a speaker's ability to select and combine linguistic resources to construct meaning, identity, and social relations. Recent research confirms that code-switching is not a symptom of a lack of competence, but rather a discursive practice that reflects the speaker's adaptability and social skills in using language. Furthermore, code-switching is understood as part of language competence, where elements of language interact in a single, seamless utterance In a global and digital context, multilingualism is increasingly viewed as social capital and a symbol of an individual's effective participation in various communication domains, both local and transnational (García et al., 2021; Holmes and Wilson, 2022).

Code-switching is understood as the practice of switching from one language to another within a single speech event. There are two types of code-switching: inter-sentential and intra-sentential. This phenomenon is influenced by several factors, including social and situational factors. For example, code-switching is characterized by changes in topic, audience, power relations, and communication goals. (Gumperz & Jan-Petter Blom, 2000) emphasized that code-switching is used as a strategy to demonstrate social identity, solidarity, or emphasize certain meanings. Recent studies show that in modern, multilingual societies, especially in the digital space, code-switching is used to construct self-image, group identity, and social participation (Tagg & Seargeant, 2021) state that code-switching that occurs on social media represents speakers' awareness of diverse norms and audiences. Thus, code-switching is understood as an indicator of high multilingualism

and the speaker's pragmatic ability to adapt language to dynamic social contexts.

Example,

"Laporan kegiatan ini sudah siap. *I will send it to the manager this afternoon*".

"Penelitiannya menarik, *but the methodology needs revision*".

Similarly, code-mixing is understood as the insertion of elements of another language or code, such as words or phrases, into the primary language structure without any complete code change or blending. Unlike code-switching, code-mixing often occurs at the lexical or morphological level and reflects the integration of the speaker's language skills. Muysken (2000) emphasized that code-mixing is the result of the interaction of overlapping language systems in bilingual practice. Contemporary studies of code-mixing are understood as normal in multilingual communication or interaction, especially in today's digital society. The boundaries between languages, or isoglosses, are becoming increasingly fluid (Zhao & Zappavigna, 2022). Research by García et al. (2021) from the perspective of multilingual practice confirms that code-mixing is understood not as a sign of declining language competence, but as a representation of the use of language skills to achieve effective communication. In the Indonesian context, code-mixing is frequently practiced in everyday conversation, social media, and youth language. It has become a symbol of modernization, group identity, and social status. Thus, code mixing reflects the flexibility of language and the dynamics of speaker identity in contemporary multilingual societies such as today.

Example:

"Produk ini lagi *best seller*, jangan sampai kehabisan."

"Presentasinya sudah oke, tinggal *improve* di bagian hasil."

IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING LANGUAGE IN MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES

In a multilingual society, learning a language requires an understanding of attitudes and ideologies toward that language. Both are important because they greatly assist in understanding the impact of language use, social and identity dynamics, and conflict. Language attitudes refer to a speaker's assessments, beliefs, and feelings toward a particular language, dialect, or language variety, which directly influence language choice, language maintenance, and language change in society. Language attitudes consist of three main components: knowledge and beliefs (cognitive), feelings and emotions (affective), and tendencies to act (conative). These three components shape a speaker's linguistic behavior. This concept remains relevant and is reinforced by recent research showing that language behavior plays a crucial role in the context of globalization and digital communication (Holmes, 2005). Meanwhile, language ideology is understood as the social beliefs that shape how society views and uses language, including its value, function, and status, often related to power, identity, and social validation (Woolard, 1998). In multilingual societies, language attitudes and ideologies play a major role in language maintenance, language shift, the formation of language policies, and the construction of speakers' social identities, both in online and offline contexts (García et al., 2021). Thus, language attitudes and language ideologies are interrelated in explaining how languages are valued, used, and positioned within the social structures of modern societies today. Thus, the study of language attitudes and ideologies is an important bridge connecting basic understanding of multilingual societies with concrete actions in language policy and planning.

Language policy refers to a set of decisions, ideologies, and practices that regulate language use in various domains of social

life, such as education, government, media, and public spaces. (Spolsky, 2004) explains that language policy encompasses three main components: the actual linguistic practices of society, the adopted language ideology, and language management carried out by authorities or official institutions. This concept remains relevant and has been expanded upon in recent studies, which emphasize that language policy is not only top-down but also influenced by societal practices and the dynamics of globalization. Meanwhile, language planning is a planned effort to develop, regulate, or modify a language through three main domains: status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning (Cooper, 1989). Recent research shows that language planning is often used to strengthen national identity while managing linguistic diversity in multilingual societies, such as policies on establishing a national language, standardizing spelling, and developing regional languages (Hornberger et al., 2018; Fishman 1972) emphasized that language policy has a strategic role in preventing language shift and supporting the preservation of minority languages, a view that remains relevant in the contemporary context when many languages are threatened with extinction due to the dominance of global languages. Thus, language policy and language planning function as social and political instruments that direct language development to align with the social, cultural, and ideological needs of modern society.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Language variations in cyberspace develop as a response to fast, multimodal, and technology-based communication systems. In social media, online conversations, and discussion forums, speakers create and use new language varieties that reflect social identities, communities, and specific communication goals. (Crystal, 2006) refers to this phenomenon as Netspeak, which is

understood as a mixed language variety that combines written, spoken, and abbreviation, emoji, and visual symbols such as emoji, emoticons, GIFs, and abbreviations (LOL, BTW, fyp, wkwk). For example, in the study of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), digital language variations are community-shaped, as language norms and practices are shaped by specific online communities (Dresner & Herring, 2010). Users often code-switch, code-mix, and vary their language styles to adapt to diverse audiences (Zhao & Zappavigna, 2022). Recent research shows that digital communication is increasingly influenced by platform logic and algorithms, often adapting word choice and language style to reach a wider audience (Tagg & Seargeant, 2021). Thus, language variation in digital spaces not only reflects innovation or the creation of meaning and linguistic variation, but also demonstrates the interaction between technology, ideology, power, and social identity in contemporary communication.

Future challenges in sociolinguistic studies are increasingly complex and diverse due to the development of digital technology, increased human mobility, and global socio-cultural changes. Population migration between countries has led to an increasing number of people using more than one language. Therefore, research on interlanguage encounters, identity formation, and societal perspectives on specific languages has become a pressing issue in current sociolinguistics research (Blommaert J, 2010; Blommaert & Rumpton, 2011). The development of cyberspace makes it highly possible to extend sociolinguistics research to language use in virtual spaces. For example, language in social media, examining how the public adapts language to be accepted by digital systems, and human interaction with artificial intelligence (AI) technology. This significantly influences how people speak and shape their social identities.

Recent research has utilized corpus analysis, digital ethnography, and computer-mediated discourse analysis (CMDA) approaches to examine language variation in social media and cyberspace (Herring, 2004; Herring, 2011). Research in the sociolinguistics field also makes it possible to use qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of both. Qualitative methods, such as conversation analysis, communication ethnography (Hymes, 1971, 1974), and linguistic ethnography, are used to understand the relationship between language, culture, identity, and social practices, especially in multilingual communities (Copland & Creese, 2015). Quantitative methods are used to study language variation and change by examining the frequency of linguistic elements and their relationship to social factors such as age, gender, social class, and social networks (Tagliamonte, 2006). Thus, sociolinguistic research methods are multidisciplinary and adaptive, integrating linguistic, ethnographic, statistical, and digital approaches to understand the complex dynamics of the relationship between language and society in the modern era. On the other hand, the dominance of global languages such as English continues to pose challenges to the preservation of minority languages, language revitalization has become the focus of future research on Language and Society in the context of sociolinguistics (Crystal, 2000; Grenoble & L. J. Whaley, 2020).

Furthermore, the increasing attention to language discrimination has encouraged the emergence of several studies discussing language rights, equal access to language, in education, public spaces, and digital spaces. As a result, the future of sociolinguistics studies demands a multidisciplinary approach that integrates linguistics, digital technology, anthropology, public policy, and ethics to respond to these global challenges. Furthermore, this step also ensures that

linguistic diversity is not a mistake but a diversity that must be recognized and preserved amidst change.

CONCLUSION

Sociolinguistic studies demonstrate that language is a dynamic social phenomenon situated within a specific situational context. A speaker's language choice is influenced by the communication context, social relationships, speech goals, and cultural norms. Phonological, phonetic, lexical, and grammatical variations emphasize that language differences are not deviations, but rather reflections of social identity, regional background, and the community of speakers. Language competence is measured not only by mastery of language structure, but also by the ability to choose and combine languages appropriately as communication and identity strategies.

The relationship between language, culture, and identity emphasizes that language is the primary medium for representing cultural values, solidarity, and negotiating social positions. Sociolinguistics is able to examine language practices in real life, including in digital spaces that present new, multimodal, and technology-based forms of language variation. Therefore, sociolinguistic studies need to continue to develop multidisciplinarily to understand changes in language practices, protect linguistic diversity, and respond to linguistic and identity issues in modern, global societies.

REFERENCES

Blommaert J. (2010). *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*. Cambridge University Press.

Blommaert, J., & Rumpton, B. (2011). Language and Superdiversity. *Diversities*, *13*(2).

www.unesco.org/shs/diversities/vol13/issue2/art1©UNesC O

Cooper, R. L. (1989). *Language Planning and Social Change*. Cambridge University Press.

Copland, F., & Creese, A. (2015). *The Routledge handbook of linguistic ethnography*. Routledge.

Crystal, D. (2000). *Language death*. Cambridge University Pres. https://doi.org/doi:10.1017/CBO9781139106856

Crystal, D. (2006). *Language and the Internet (2nd ed.)*. Cambridge University Press.

Dresner, E., & Herring, S. C. (2010). Functions of the nonverbal in CMC: Emoticons and illocutionary force. *International Communication Association*, *20*(3), 249–268. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2010.01362.x

Fishman, J. A. (1972). *Language in sociocultural change*. Stanford University Press.

García, O. , Flores, N., & Spotti, M. (2021). Language and the Perils of Normalizing Multilingualism in Education. *The Modern Language Journal*, *105*(2), 368–383.

Grenoble, L. A. , & L. J. Whaley. (2020). Toward a new conceptualisation of language revitalisation. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *42*(1), 1–16. https://doi.org/DOI:10.1080/01434632.2020.1827645

Gumperz, J. J. (2009). *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511611834

Gumperz, J. J., & Jan-Petter Blom. (2000). *Social Meaning in Linguistic Structure: Code switching in Norway dalam The Bilingualism Reader*. Taylor & Francis Group. London.

Herring, S. C. (2004). Computer-mediated discourse analysis: An approach to researching online behavior. In *Designing for Virtual Communities in the Service of Learning* (Issue March). https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511805080.016

Herring, S. C. (2011). *A Faceted Classificaton Scheme For Computer-Mediated Discourse.* Indiana University Press.

Holmes and Wilson. (2022). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Routledge. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367821852

Holmes, D. (2005). *Communication Theory: Media, Technology, and Society*. Sage Publications Ltd.

Hornberger NH, Tapia AA, anks DH, Dueñas FK, & Lee S. (2018). *Ethnography of language planning and policy. Language Teaching*. *51*(2), 152–186. https://doi.org/doi:10.1017/S0261444817000428

Hymes, D. (1971). *On Communicative Competence*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Hymes, D. (1974). *Fondations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. Unversity of Pennsylvania.

Labove, W. (1972). *Sociolinguistics Pattern*. University of Pennsylvania Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500004528

Mesthrie, R. , & et. al. (2009). *Introducting Sociolinguistics*. Edinburgh University Press.

Sapir, E. (1921). *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech*. Harcourt, Brace & World Inc.

Spolsky, B. (2004). *Language Policy*. Cambridge University Press.

Tagg, C., & Seargeant, P. (2021). *Social media and the future of writing*. Springer.

Tagliamonte, S. A. (2006). *Analysing Sociolinguistics Variation*. Cambridge University Press.

Trudgill, P. (2020). *Millennia of language change: Sociolinguistic studies in deep historical linguistics*. Cambridge University Press. .

Wardhaugh, R., & Fuller, J. M. (2021). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (Eight). Willey Blackwell.

Whorf, B. L. (1956). *Language, thought, and reality: Selected writing (J. B. Carroll, Ed.).* Technology Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Wiley.

Woolard, K. A. (1998). *Introduction: Language and problems of ideology. In B. B. Schieffelin, K. A. Woolard, & P. V. Kroskrity (Eds.), Language ideologies: Practice and theory.* Oxford University Press. .

Zhao, S., & Zappavigna. (2022). Social media in education: Multimodal discourse, communication, and engagemen. *Discourse and Communication*, *16*(3), 305–324. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/17504813211038247

AUTHOR'S PROFILE

Dr. Prapti Wigati Purwaningrum, S.S, M.Hum

The author is currently a lecturer in the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Communication and Language at Bina Sarana Informatika University. She completed her Doctorate degree in linguistics from the Indonesian Education University, previously completing her master's degree in Applied Linguistics at the State University of Jakarta. Several studies have been conducted in the fields of Pragmatics, Semiotics, and Critical Discourse Analysis. In this book chapter, in addition to the domain of pragmatics, a glimpse of the current development of pragmatics is also presented, which is very possible to be included in cross-disciplinary studies. One that is very relevant today is the study of the use of language in virtual space.

CHAPTER 2
THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF LANGUAGE VARIATION

Retno Dwigustini
Universitas Bina sarana Informatika, Jakarta
E-mail: retno.rgu@bsi.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Language variation is a fundamental characteristic of human language, reflecting the dynamic relationship between linguistic forms and social life. Rather than being uniform and fixed, language exists in multiple forms that differ according to region, social group, context, and communicative purpose. These differences, known as linguistic variation, occur at all levels of language, including pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse. The study of language variation is central to sociolinguistics because it explains how language both shapes and reflects social structures, identities, and interactions within a community.

One of the key assumptions in modern sociolinguistics is that variation is not random but systematic and patterned. Labov (1972) emphasized that linguistic variation is “structured heterogeneity,” meaning that alternative forms coexist within a language and are influenced by both linguistic and social factors. This perspective challenged earlier linguistic traditions that focused primarily on idealized, homogeneous language systems and ignored real-life language use. According to Labov, understanding variation is essential for explaining language change and the social meaning of linguistic choices.

Schiffrin (2003) argues that sociolinguistic analysis must connect micro-level discourse organization with broader social

and cultural patterns. Linguistic choices gain meaning through their placement in ongoing interaction, where participants rely on contextual knowledge and shared expectations. Similarly, Bayley, Cameron, and Lucas (2013) emphasize that sociolinguistics examines language as a social phenomenon shaped by interactional goals, participant roles, and situational context. From this perspective, variation is not simply a reflection of social structure but a resource that speakers actively use to accomplish social actions.

Edwards (2013) emphasizes that a language cannot be studied separately from social context because linguistic forms reflect social relationships, identities, and structures. The Language exists within sociocultural environments, and its use is shaped by social factors such as class, community, gender, and institutions. Edwards also explains that languages and dialects receive different social evaluations, and society often places them in hierarchies of prestige.

Similarly, Chambers (2003) argues that variation is an inherent property of language and that no two speakers use language in exactly the same way. Differences in speech often correlate with factors such as age, gender, social class, education, and ethnicity. These patterns demonstrate that language functions not only as a communication tool but also as a marker of social identity and group membership. From this viewpoint, studying variation provides insight into how speakers position themselves within social hierarchies and communities.

From a broader sociolinguistic perspective, Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015) state that language variation reflects the interaction between linguistic systems and social context. Speakers adjust their language according to situation, audience, and purpose, a phenomenon known as style-shifting. This adaptability highlights the functional role of variation in

achieving communicative effectiveness and social appropriateness.

Furthermore, variation serves as the foundation for understanding language change over time. As noted by Holmes and Wilson (2017), linguistic change often begins as variation within a community, where competing forms gradually shift in frequency. By examining patterns of variation, researchers can identify ongoing changes and predict future developments in a language.

In sum, the study of language variation provides essential theoretical insights into the nature of language as a socially embedded and evolving system. It demonstrates that diversity in language use is systematic, meaningful, and closely tied to social structure and human interaction. These foundations form the basis for the theoretical discussions presented in this chapter.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS

The study of language variation emerged as a response to limitations in earlier linguistic traditions. Structural linguistics, particularly the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, focused on language as an abstract system (langue) and paid little attention to variation in actual speech (parole). Similarly, early generative linguistics emphasized linguistic competence and idealized native speakers, often ignoring real-world language diversity. In the 1950s and 1960s, scholars began to recognize that language could not be fully understood without considering its social context. This realization led to the development of sociolinguistics as an interdisciplinary field combining linguistics, sociology, and anthropology.

The development of sociolinguistics emerged from the growing awareness that language cannot be fully understood without considering its social context. Early linguistic traditions,

particularly structuralism and generative linguistics, focused primarily on language as an abstract system. Saussure (1983) distinguished between langue (the abstract system of language) and parole (actual language use), but his framework gave limited attention to social variation. Similarly, early generative linguistics emphasized linguistic competence and idealized homogeneous speakers, often overlooking the diversity and variability found in real speech communities.

At the same time, Schiffrin (2010) explains that discourse markers connect utterances to linguistic, social, and cognitive contexts, shaping how messages are understood. Schiffrin emphasizes that discourse is not only linguistic structure but also a form of social practice embedded in interaction.

Rampton (2001) notes that interactional sociolinguistics focuses on the situated nature of communication, examining how participants negotiate identities, relationships, and social boundaries through talk. This perspective builds on the foundational work of Gumperz, who demonstrated that successful communication depends on the interpretation of contextualization cues such as intonation, speech rhythm, code choice, and discourse style (Gumperz, 2001, 2006). These cues signal how utterances should be interpreted within a particular social and cultural framework. This shift reflects a broader movement in sociolinguistics toward understanding language as socially constructed through interaction rather than simply distributed across predefined social groups.

The field gained strong empirical and methodological foundations through the work of William Labov in the 1960s and 1970s. Labov’s quantitative studies of urban speech communities demonstrated that linguistic variation is systematic and socially stratified. His research on New York City English showed that pronunciation patterns correlate with social class and speech style, providing clear evidence that language

variation reflects social structure (Labov, 1972). Labov's work established variationist sociolinguistics as a central approach within the field.

Following Labov's contributions, sociolinguistics expanded to include new theoretical and methodological perspectives. Researchers such as Milroy and Milroy (1985) emphasized the role of social networks in maintaining or spreading linguistic features, while later scholars like Eckert (2000) introduced the concept of communities of practice to explain how individuals use language to construct social identity in local contexts. These developments shifted the focus from broad social categories to more interaction-based and identity-oriented analyses.

Today, sociolinguistics is a well-established interdisciplinary field that examines language variation and change in relation to social factors such as class, gender, ethnicity, age, and globalization. As noted by Holmes and Wilson (2017), modern sociolinguistics seeks to understand not only how language varies across communities but also how speakers use linguistic resources to negotiate meaning, identity, and social relationships. The historical development of sociolinguistics thus reflects a gradual shift from viewing language as a static system to understanding it as a dynamic, socially embedded practice.

VARIATIONIST APPROACHES (LABOV AND SUCCESSORS)

The variationist approach is a central theoretical and methodological framework in sociolinguistics that explains how and why language varies within a speech community. Developed by William Labov, this approach is grounded in the principle that linguistic variation is systematic, socially meaningful, and essential for understanding language structure and change. Variationist sociolinguistics rejects the traditional

assumption that language is homogeneous and instead views variability as an inherent and structured property of language. Labov (1972) introduced the concept of “orderly heterogeneity,” arguing that the coexistence of multiple linguistic forms follows predictable patterns rather than occurring randomly.

At the core of the variationist model is the concept of the linguistic variable, which refers to alternative forms that convey the same referential meaning but differ in pronunciation, grammar, or lexical choice. For example, the alternation between working and workin’ in English represents a phonological variable, while the use of double negation (I don’t know nothing) versus standard negation represents a grammatical variable. According to Labov (1972), the study of such variables allows researchers to identify the social and linguistic constraints that influence speakers’ choices.

One of the defining features of the variationist approach is its quantitative methodology. Researchers collect data from natural speech through interviews, participant observation, or recordings, and then analyze the frequency of different variants across social groups and linguistic contexts. Statistical analysis is used to determine how internal factors (such as phonological environment or grammatical structure) and external factors (such as age, gender, social class, ethnicity, and style) condition variation. This empirical and data-driven approach distinguishes variationist sociolinguistics from earlier impressionistic studies.

Labov’s classic studies (1972) provided strong evidence for the relationship between language and social structure. His research on postvocalic /r/ in New York City showed that pronunciation patterns correlated with socioeconomic status and level of formality. Speakers from higher social classes and those in more formal situations were more likely to use the prestige variant. Similarly, his study of Martha’s Vineyard demonstrated how linguistic variation could reflect local identity and social

attitudes, as younger residents adopted particular vowel pronunciations to signal resistance to external social influence.

Another major contribution of the variationist approach is its explanation of language change in progress. Labov (1994) proposed the apparent-time hypothesis, which compares speech patterns across different age groups to identify ongoing linguistic change. If younger speakers use a variant more frequently than older speakers, the pattern may indicate a change spreading through the community. Labov also described the typical S-shaped curve of language change, in which a new form spreads slowly at first, then rapidly, and finally stabilizes.

Following Labov's foundational work, later scholars expanded the variationist framework by incorporating more detailed social dimensions. Milroy and Milroy (1985) introduced the concept of social network theory, emphasizing that the strength and density of interpersonal relationships influence linguistic behavior. Speakers who belong to dense, close-knit networks tend to maintain local norms and resist change, while those with loose networks are more likely to adopt innovative forms. This perspective highlighted the importance of everyday social interaction in shaping variation.

Further developments shifted attention from broad social categories to identity and local social meaning. Eckert (2000) argued that variation should be understood as a resource for constructing social identity within communities of practice. Her ethnographic study of adolescents showed that linguistic features are used strategically to express group affiliation, social stance, and personal style. This "third wave" of variationist research focuses on the social meanings attached to linguistic variables rather than only their correlation with demographic categories.

Tagliamonte (2012) suggests that quantitative analyses should be complemented by qualitative investigation of how

linguistic variants operate in specific interactional contexts. Coupland (2007) further argues that speakers manipulate linguistic variation stylistically to perform identities, align with particular social groups, or position themselves in relation to others. From this perspective, variation becomes a form of social meaning-making rather than merely an index of demographic categories. Thus, interactional sociolinguistics bridges the gap between macro-level variation patterns and micro-level communicative practice.

Overall, the variationist approach and its subsequent developments have provided a comprehensive framework for understanding language variation as a structured, socially embedded, and meaning-bearing phenomenon. By integrating quantitative analysis with social interpretation, the work of Labov and his successors demonstrates that linguistic variation is central to the study of language structure, social identity, and language change.

STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Structural and functional perspectives provide an important theoretical foundation for understanding language variation by examining language as both a system of organized forms and a social resource used to accomplish communicative purposes. From a structural perspective, language variation is analyzed in terms of its internal organization, including phonology, morphology, syntax, and discourse patterns. Structural linguistics assumes that language consists of interconnected elements that form a systematic whole, and variation occurs when alternative forms exist within the same linguistic system. Functional-structural linguistic traditions, such as those influenced by Hjelmslev and later developments in functional grammar, emphasize that linguistic unit gain meaning through

their relationships within the overall system and their role in communication (Butler, 2003).

Schiffrin (2003) demonstrates that features such as discourse markers structure conversation, signal speaker intentions, and guide listener interpretation. These elements help manage turn-taking, topic development, and interpersonal stance. Similarly, Auer (2007) shows that code-switching and language alternation should be understood as interactional strategies that convey alignment, distance, emphasis, or contextual shifts, rather than simply as structural alternations between linguistic systems. This perspective highlights the multifunctional nature of linguistic variation, linking form, meaning, and social function within interaction.

The functional perspective extends this view by focusing on the purposes language serves in social interaction. Functionalists argue that linguistic forms are shaped by communicative needs, social roles, and contextual demands. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), widely developed and applied in contemporary research, proposes that language simultaneously performs ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions, meaning that variation reflects differences in meaning, social relationships, and discourse context (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). From this perspective, speakers select linguistic variants not randomly, but strategically, depending on factors such as audience, formality, identity, and communicative goals.

In sociolinguistics, structural and functional perspectives are complementary. Structural analysis explains what forms vary and how they are organized, while functional analysis explains why speakers choose particular variants in specific contexts. This integration aligns with broader structural-functional theory in sociology, which views social phenomena as parts of an interconnected system where each element contributes to maintaining communication, social order, and

shared meaning (Parsons, 2001; Nickerson, 2024). Functionalist theory emphasizes that social structure, including language, work together to transmit cultural values, support social integration, and maintain stability within communities.

Moreover, structural-functional approaches highlight that language variation reflects adaptation to social needs. When communicative contexts change—such as shifts in technology, education, or social networks—linguistic structures may also evolve to maintain efficiency and relevance. Social change is thus understood as an adaptive process within an interconnected system, where adjustments in one part (e.g., communication practices) influence other parts of the social structure.

Overall, structural and functional perspectives together provide a comprehensive framework for understanding language variation. They demonstrate that linguistic differences are not merely formal alternatives but are systematically organized and socially meaningful choices shaped by both the internal structure of language and the external demands of communication.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS INFLUENCING VARIATION

Language variation is shaped by the interaction of internal (linguistic) and external (social and contextual) factors. Variationist sociolinguistics emphasizes that speakers' choices among alternative linguistic forms are not random but are systematically conditioned by constraints operating both within the language system and within the social environment. Understanding these factors is essential for explaining patterns of language use and for identifying processes of language change.

Internal factors refer to linguistic conditions that influence the occurrence of a particular variant. These include

phonological environment, grammatical structure, lexical frequency, semantic properties, and discourse context. For example, certain phonological variants may occur more frequently before specific sounds, while grammatical alternations may be conditioned by tense, aspect, or syntactic position. According to Tagliamonte (2012), internal constraints reveal the structural organization of variation and demonstrate that linguistic systems allow multiple forms that are distributed according to predictable patterns. Similarly, Labov (2001) argues that internal linguistic factors play a crucial role in shaping variation and often interact with cognitive and articulatory processes such as ease of pronunciation and processing efficiency.

Tannen (2005) demonstrates that differences in conversational style—such as levels of directness, involvement, or formality—reflect culturally shaped interactional norms and can influence interpersonal understanding. At the same time, broader sociocultural factors affect how linguistic cues are interpreted. Blommaert (2005) argues that successful communication depends on shared sociocultural knowledge and access to appropriate linguistic resources. Miscommunication often occurs when participants draw on different interpretive frameworks. Johnstone (2011) further explains that repeated interaction within communities leads to the development of locally meaningful linguistic practices, linking individual choices to community norms and identities.

In addition to internal constraints, external factors—also known as social or extralinguistic factors—significantly influence language variation. These include demographic characteristics such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, education level, ethnicity, and geographic location, as well as situational factors such as formality, audience, topic, and communicative setting. Research has consistently shown that

linguistic variables correlate with social stratification. For instance, speakers from higher socioeconomic groups often use prestige forms more frequently, while vernacular variants may signal local identity or group solidarity (Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

Age is particularly important in the study of language change, as younger speakers often lead linguistic innovation. Gender differences have also been widely documented, with studies suggesting that women tend to use standard or prestige forms more frequently in stable situations but may lead change in progress (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2013). Social networks further influence variation, as individuals embedded in dense and close-knit networks are more likely to maintain local norms, whereas those with loose networks are more open to linguistic innovation (Milroy & Milroy, 2010).

Situational context also affects language use through style-shifting, where speakers adjust their speech according to the level of formality, audience expectations, and communicative goals. This reflects the speaker's awareness of social norms and their ability to use language strategically to express identity, authority, politeness, or solidarity.

Importantly, internal and external factors do not operate independently. Variation emerges from the interaction between linguistic structure and social meaning. As noted by Meyerhoff (2019), sociolinguistic analysis seeks to explain how structural constraints and social motivations work together to shape patterns of variation within a community.

Overall, the study of internal and external factors demonstrates that language variation is both structurally conditioned and socially embedded. By examining how linguistic environments interact with social characteristics and communicative contexts, researchers gain a deeper

understanding of how language reflects social organization, identity, and ongoing processes of change.

LANGUAGE CHANGE AND DIFFUSION IN COMMUNITIES

Language change is a natural and continuous process that occurs as speakers modify linguistic forms over time. In sociolinguistics, language change is closely connected to variation, since changes typically begin as alternative forms that coexist within a speech community. When one variant gradually increases in frequency and spreads among speakers, it may eventually become the dominant or standard form. Understanding how linguistic innovations emerge and spread within communities is essential for explaining both the evolution of language and the social dynamics that shape it.

One of the most influential contributions to the study of language change comes from Labov (2001), who argued that language change originates in everyday speech and follows systematic patterns rather than occurring randomly. According to Labov, change often begins below the level of conscious awareness and spreads gradually through a community. He also described the apparent-time construct, in which differences in language use across age groups are used to identify changes in progress. If younger speakers consistently use a new form more frequently than older speakers, this pattern suggests that a linguistic innovation is spreading.

Language change typically follows an S-shaped curve: the innovation spreads slowly at first, accelerates as more speakers adopt it, and eventually stabilizes when it becomes widely accepted (Tagliamonte, 2012). This pattern reflects the social nature of language, as speakers influence one another through interaction and social networks.

Blommaert and Backus (2013) emphasize that modern speakers possess complex linguistic repertoires shaped by mobility, migration, and globalization. Rather than using discrete languages, individuals draw flexibly on available resources depending on context. García and Wei (2014) describe this phenomenon as translanguaging, where speakers strategically combine linguistic features to construct meaning in interaction. Such practices facilitate the diffusion of linguistic features across social and geographical boundaries, illustrating how interactional processes drive language change in dynamic communities.

The process through which linguistic innovations spread is known as diffusion. Diffusion can occur through several mechanisms. Geographical diffusion refers to the spread of a linguistic feature from one region to another, often in a wave-like pattern. Hierarchical diffusion occurs when innovations spread from socially or economically influential groups—such as urban centers or higher-status communities—to other groups (Meyerhoff, 2019). These patterns demonstrate that both physical proximity and social prestige play important roles in the adoption of new linguistic forms.

Social networks are particularly important in the diffusion process. Research by Milroy and Milroy (2010) shows that dense, close-knit networks tend to maintain traditional linguistic forms and resist change, while loose and open networks facilitate the spread of innovations. Individuals who act as bridges between different social groups often play a key role in transmitting new linguistic features across communities.

In addition to social structure, factors such as migration, urbanization, education, and mass media can accelerate language diffusion. In contemporary societies, digital communication and global mobility have increased contact between speakers from different linguistic backgrounds, leading

to faster and wider spread of linguistic innovations. As noted by Holmes and Wilson (2017), modern communication technologies contribute to the rapid circulation of new words, expressions, and pronunciation patterns across communities and even across national boundaries.

Language change and diffusion are also closely related to social meaning and identity. Speakers may adopt new forms to signal modernity, group membership, or alignment with prestigious or influential communities. Conversely, some groups may resist external changes in order to maintain local identity and cultural distinctiveness.

Overall, the study of language change and diffusion highlights the dynamic nature of language as a social phenomenon. Linguistic innovations emerge from patterns of variation, spread through social interaction and community networks, and reflect broader social, cultural, and technological changes. By examining how language evolves within communities, sociolinguists gain valuable insight into the relationship between language, society, and human behavior.

CONCLUSION

The theoretical foundations of language variation demonstrate that linguistic diversity is an inherent and systematic characteristic of human language. Rather than being random or irregular, variation reflects structured patterns shaped by both linguistic constraints and social influences. The development of sociolinguistics has shown that language must be understood as a social practice embedded within communities, where speakers use linguistic resources to communicate meaning, construct identity, and negotiate social relationships.

The variationist tradition, particularly the work of Labov (2001), has established that variation is “orderly heterogeneity,”

meaning that alternative linguistic forms coexist within a system and are distributed according to identifiable linguistic and social factors. This perspective highlights the importance of empirical, data-driven analysis in understanding how variation operates and how it contributes to ongoing processes of language change.

In addition, structural and functional perspectives emphasize that variation is shaped both by the internal organization of language and by communicative needs. As noted by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), linguistic choices are closely related to the meanings speakers wish to express and the social contexts in which communication occurs. At the same time, research on internal and external factors demonstrates that variation is conditioned by phonological and grammatical environments as well as by social variables such as age, gender, social networks, and level of formality (Meyerhoff, 2019).

The relationship between variation and language change further underscores the dynamic nature of language. Linguistic innovations emerge from patterns of variation and spread through communities via social interaction, diffusion, and network connections. These processes reflect broader social developments, including mobility, technological change, and shifting social identities (Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

Overall, the theoretical perspectives discussed in this chapter highlight the inseparable relationship between language and society. Language variation is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but also a reflection of social structure, cultural values, and individual identity. By integrating insights from variationist research, structural-functional theory, and studies of language change, sociolinguistics provides a comprehensive framework for understanding language as a dynamic, socially embedded system. These foundations are essential for further analysis of how variation operates in specific communities and communicative contexts.

REFERENCES

Auer, P. (2007). *Style and social identities: Alternative approaches to linguistic heterogeneity*. De Gruyter Mouton.

Bayley, R., Cameron, R., & Lucas, C. (Eds.). (2013). *The Oxford handbook of sociolinguistics*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199744084.001.0001

Butler, C. S. (2003). *Structure and function: A guide to three major structural-functional Theories*. John Benjamins.

Blommaert, J., & Backus, A. (2013). Superdiverse repertoires and the individual. *Applied Linguistics Review, 4*(1), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2013-0001

Chambers, J. K. (2003). *Sociolinguistic theory: Linguistic variation and its social significance* (2nd ed.). Blackwell Publishing.

Coupland, N. (2007). *Style: Language variation and identity*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511755064

Eckert, P., & McConnell-Ginet, S. (2013). *Language and gender* (2nd ed.). Cambridge niversity Press.

Eckert, P. (2000). *Linguistic variation as social practice: The linguistic construction of identity in Belten High*. Blackwell.

Edwards, J. (2013). *Sociolinguistics: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.

García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137385765

Gumperz, J. J. (2006). Interactional sociolinguistics: A personal perspective. In S. L. Eerdmans, C. L. Prevignano, & P. J. Thibault (Eds.), *Language and interaction: Discussions with John J. Gumperz* (pp. 1–10). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *Halliday's introduction to functional grammar* (4th ed.). Routledge.

Holmes, J., & Wilson, N. (2017). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (5th ed.). Routledge.

Johnstone, B. (2011). *Discourse analysis* (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

Labov, W. (2001). *Principles of linguistic change: Volume 2. Social factors*. Blackwell.

Labov, W. (1972). *Sociolinguistic patterns*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Meyerhoff, M. (2019). *Introducing sociolinguistics* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Milroy, L., & Milroy, J. (1985). Linguistic change, social network and speaker innovation. *Journal of Linguistics, 21*(2), 339–384.

Milroy, L., & Milroy, J. (2010). Social network and social class: Toward an integrated sociolinguistic model. *Language in Society, 21*(1), 1–26.

Nickerson, C. (2024). Functionalist perspective on education. Simply Psychology.

Parsons, T. (2001). *The social system* (Rev. ed.). Routledge.

Rampton, B. (2001). Language crossing, stylization and identity. *Journal of Sociolinguistics, 5*(4), 443–459. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9481.00157

Saussure, F. de. (1983). *Course in general linguistics* (C. Bally & A. Sechehaye, Eds.; R. Harris, Trans.). Duckworth.

Schiffrin, D. (2003). Discourse analysis and sociolinguistics. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen, & H. E. Hamilton (Eds.), *The handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 729–745). Blackwell Publishing.

Schiffrin, D. (2010). *Discourse markers*. Cambridge University Press

Tagliamonte, S. A. (2012). *Variationist sociolinguistics: Change, observation, interpretation*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Tannen, D. (2005). *Conversational style: Analyzing talk among friends* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Wardhaugh, R., & Fuller, J. M. (2015). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (7th ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

AUTHOR'S PROFILE

Retno Dwigustini

The author, Retno Dwigustini, M.Pd., is an English lecturer based at Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika. She has been teaching English since 1996. She has extensive teaching experience in various institutions, including elementary schools, junior high schools, senior high schools, and universities. She has taught a wide range of courses such as TOEFL, Scientific Writing, Grammar, Speaking, Listening, and others. She has also worked as a translator for a foreign company in Indonesia and participated in an Indonesia–Korea teacher exchange program for online learning for three years.

CHAPTER 3
SOCIAL FACTORS IN LANGUAGE VARIATION

Retno Wulan
Universitas Bangka Belitung, Kep. Bangka Belitung
E-mail: retnowulan@ubb.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

In sociolinguistics, language variation is one of the fundamental phenomena demonstrating how social factors such as social class, gender, ethnic, and geography dynamically influence language use. This variation does not only represent the interlocutors' diversities but also explore the broad social structures – identity, stratification, mobility, and social change. It is important to note that language is not a monolithic entity; it develops and adapts to social contexts. Linguistic variation is a manifestation resulting from the interaction between social variables and language choice. For instance, in multicultural and urban societies, language variation reflects how the interlocutors negotiate their identities, social structures, modernisms, and language choice (Syam et al., 2023). In this context, language is also described as a system which records and shapes the social reality. The variation in pronunciation, lexical choices, or sentence structures can define individuals' social class, indicate group belonging, or signify certain cultural norms.

Furthermore, the development of digital technology enriches the study of language variation. The social media and digitalization era bring new dynamics into how interlocutors express their social identity through language. For instance, the mother tongue often used by local communities remains still while adapting to the language style due to today's digital era, such as abbreviations, mixed language, and slang (Ahmadi et al.,

2024). On the other hand, the language style found in social media, online forums, and direct messages is significantly influenced by speakers' gender and age (Elsheikh et al., 2024). Methodological approach also develops the language variation. A traditional study of sociolinguistics conducted through survey, observation, and interview has been currently supported by quantitative and computational methods. For instance, the word embeddings are used to track the representation of socio-economics or ethnics in large-scale media corps (Ma et al., 2025). It shows that language variation is not only discussed in micro situations such as daily communication but also in macro circumstances through big-data analysis.

The sociolinguistic study enables people to holistically describe how language varies between upper and lower social-classes, how male and female select different norms in speech, and how the generation, ethnicity, and regions influence speakers' perception toward standard and non-standard variation. Thus, an understanding on language variation is not only the linguistic study, but also the reflection on social structure and cultural shift in certain communities. This chapter will explore the main social factors in language variation such as social class, gender, age or generation, ethnic or identity, and urban-rural situation. The author will reveal how each factor operates both theoretically and empirically, and how they interact to establish the language variation. By compromising and investigating these factors, the author expects that readers will have strong foundation to interpret the linguistic phenomenon from social perspective.

SOCIAL CLASS AND LINGUISTIC STRATIFICATION

Socioeconomic mostly affects certain variables in language variation. The relationship between social class and language choice represents and reflects how the social status is embedded

in the way people speak including the lexical choices, language style, level of formality, and certain registry. People often easily guest someone's status because "your speech contains a lot of information about yourself education, birth of place… language and social class are closely related" (Liu & Wen, 2006, p.196). Upper social-class speakers often use more 'prestigious' language or the closest standard language while the lower social-class communities tend to use "less prestigious" or non-standard language (Zhang & Liang, 2024; Astuti, 2014). For instance, in certain communities, upper social-class speakers pronounce /r/ much clearer than the lower social-class communities in daily communication (Hayati, 2021).

In addition, Zhang and Liang (2024) also emphasized the importance of avoiding linguistic prejudice towards interlocutors from lower social-class as the languages used are not merely wrong or not good but are reflecting their social identities and historical stratification. On the other hand, (Ario Sumilih et al., 2024) highlighted social mobility and linguistic stratification in Indonesia, revealing how the mastery of certain language (e.g. English) symbolizes the status and opens social-economy access. They also emphasized how cross-class social mobility is associated with language use as tools – the use of language or other foreign language as prestigious medium. The social and linguistic stratifications do not emerge only from social-class communities but also from intersection among the education, wealth, (Curry et al., 2024), ethnicity, etc. For instance, in the multi-ethnic communities in Australia, the language cluster was formed from the combination of social class and ethnic presenting that social-linguistic stratification is complex and interconnected (Travis & Gan, 2025).

Theoretical point of view highlighted the covert prestige as relevant element where the non-standard variations might be appreciated internally by certain societies in certain

communities although they are considered inferior externally. This phenomenon explains why the lower social-class speakers or local communities could choose the language variation deemed as non-standard in large-scale context because the variant shows identity, nativeness, and solidarity of the societies (Bickerton, 1975).

GENDER AND LANGUAGE USE PATTERNS

Noticing that gender affects how people use language, we can highlight the differences emerge not only from lexical choices or intonation, but also from the social construction regarding identity, role, and norms in societies. At this point, language serves the area for negotiated gender ideology through interaction strategies where the interlocutors indirectly strengthen or against the existing gender norms. For instance, the ‘enregisterment’ trend (using the first name as a register to address specific behavior) such as the current “Nurul” trend highlighted gender stereotype and marginalized female as “Nurul” is associated with woman’s name to criticize sexism and patriarchy convention (Fakhira & Amaly, 2024). Moreover, most current research exposed that language used by female and male are frequently varied due to social norm internalization and cultural expectation towards each gender; not merely because of biological effect. Thus, the use of a language could strengthen and reflect the norms of the gender within communities.

In addition, the speakers’ pattern in using the language often associates with how each gender negotiates the power in their interaction. In a local context in Indonesia, gender also affects the use of local languages where the women tend to be associated with the modern while the men tend to be associated with the context of speaking (Rizki et al., 2023). Moreover, women are mostly associated with polite language to show their indecisiveness, gentleness and obedience towards the social

norms presenting more demure individuals then men. Furthermore, women tend to use more formal language to define their social status or professionalism. In addition, women frequently use tag question at the end of a sentence to assert confirmation or agreement from their interlocutors (Mamentu et al., 2022). This phenomenon could be interpreted that when females use expressive languages such as “maybe”, “I think” or “could be”, the societies interpret these expressions as indecisiveness or as a form of avoiding confrontation.

On the other hand, an interaction of university students in Bandung Province, Indonesia using WhatsApp group demonstrated how males tend to use direct language, to the point approach, sometimes sarcastic or confrontative (Maulidia et al., 2025) while females frequently express politeness and social concern (Rahmawati & Djuharie, 2025). This research aligned with Elsheikh et al. (2024) who analyzed language variation based on gender in online platforms such as social media, forum, and email. They revealed consistent significant differences between male and female; female often wrote expressive language to show their emotion, intimacy, and closeness while male often wrote definitively through longer texts and engaged in less intimacy or interaction exchanges. Their study emphasized that although digital platforms are gender neutral, the gender identity remains still and being expressed strongly by language.

AGE AND GENERATIONAL LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES

Language variation across generation is one of the fascinating aspects in sociolinguistics as it reveals that language is not static; it is dynamic – develops, shifts, sometimes shifts back over time. Age gap is not about the speaker’s age number, but often reflects the contextual differences – growth era, social

contact, media and technology, education, and cultural norms – influencing language structures, style, lexicons, and variation. Ghazanfar et al. (2024) coined a concept of 'age grading' in language variation which represents how language is shifted during someone's life stages or era. They highlighted the role of social class, network, and cultures as domain factors of this language shift at different age stages. Thus, the age grading phenomenon is not only generational changes but also cross-interaction between social class and structure. In addition, apparent-time construct is often used to compare different generations; young and old speakers (Michnowicz, 2025; Chambers, 1995) in one period of time where the researcher can conclude the language trend (Meyerhoff, 2018). Moreover, the older generation in the Spanish Basque Country significantly use more regional construction (preverbal double negation) than the youths who tend to use standard language variation due to language contact and education level – the youths are more exposed to standard norms and tend to avoid the "old" regional (Gondra, 2024). Thus, the language variation across generation reflects the process of levelling dialect, standardization, or systematic shift related to social mobility, education level, and modernization.

In terms of digital scenario, language variation in social media (e.g. *Instagram)* used by teenagers also differs from the older users. A study conducted by Pratama et al. (2022) revealed that the language variation used by the teenagers include 7 abbreviations derived from English, 18 English words without abbreviations, 21 words commonly found in slang, and 4 swear words. Their study represents that young generations adapt to new divergent linguistic variation, apart from traditional style, which represents the generation era and social changes. Thus, generations also interact with urban and technologies – young generations living in big cities tend to adapt to more language

variations that are affected by globalization, digitalization, and multiculturalism. Moreover, affected by the current technologies, Indonesian young generations mostly used English in daily communication both at schools and wider social context, while the local language is getting declined (Afriazi et al., 2024). This phenomenon presents that social media and technology have rapidly accelerated linguistic innovation and defined speaking style of young generation; the age gap within modern societies is not only about the number, but also about the exposure to both social and cultural aspects. Nevertheless, the shift across generation does not mean losing the direction. In many cases, new generation contributes to revitalizing language, introducing creativity, and enhancing the function of language in modern context. Slang, digital variations, and new styles of expression can be considered as language adaptations to contemporary contexts.

ETHNICITY, IDENTITY, AND SPEECH NORMS

Dialects, local variation, and speech norms frequently determine social identities, ethnics, and culture of certain individuals or groups. A speaker does not only convey his message but also projects his identity, solidarity, native culture, and other community historical background. Thus, languages serve as tools to express and emphasize the ethnic identities (Ario Sumilih et al., 2024; Jackson, 2019) and mechanism of social stratification. In other words, ethnicity and social stratification intersect and form different language use of speakers (Gurning et al., 2024; Travis & Gan, 2025). A qualitative study conducted by Syam et al. (2023) revealed power dynamics and societal expectation also closely associated with language used by speakers in multicultural societies. This means that the interaction between ethnicity, identities, and speech norms enrich the dynamics of linguistic variation.

Asriani dan Erfinawati (2017) highlighted that the solidarity and connection among certain ethnics could be strengthened due to similar local dialects used by the individuals. This finding identified how language formed common background and understanding in multicultural societies (Aliyeva, 2023).

Multicultural communities in Indonesia, the ethnicity, identity, and speech norms are all essential variables in understanding language variation. For instance, the communities of Batak in Indonesia use Batak Toba Language not only to communicate but also to identify and emphasize their social status, kinship, and respect towards traditional cultures (Purba et al., 2025). On the other hand, Jumadi et al. (2024) revealed that multicultural communities consisting of Banjar, Dayak, Madurese, Bugis, Minangkabau, Javanese, and Sundanese use different language in different domains (e.g. home, public, education, government). For instance, Banjar speakers use Banjar language at home while Indonesian at formal situation or public to sound "neutral". They also highlighted some ethnics – mostly migrants or minorities – tend to adapt to local language in their domestic areas while shifting to Indonesian when they are in public domain. It shows that identity can be "negotiated" in line with the social contexts and speech norms.

In multicultural societies, language variation is not only linguistic decision, but also social action reflecting position, affiliation, and resistance of speakers toward dominant social structure. The variation across communities or individuals – between national and local languages, or standard and non-standard variation – depicts the process of identity negotiation among the modernization and globalization dynamic. The speakers use certain language to show "who they are" and "where they stand" in the dynamic social structure. Nevertheless, when non-standard variation is marginalized due to social, economic, or political pressure, then local language is

declining as well as the culture symbols and collective histories. Thus, it is necessary to preserve the local languages to maintain the sustainable social identities and communities' norms. The language revitalization could be one of the best practices to maintain the cultural heritage and to strengthen social cohesion in global era.

URBAN AND RURAL LINGUISTIC DIFFERENTIATION

Migration of ethnic minority communities to big cities for better education, higher life quality, or more income force them to adapt to the dominant majority culture. Thus, the use of their ethnic language and traditional cultural practices might be threatened (Ahmadi et al., 2024). The geographical context gap – urban and rural areas – and social mobility do not only determine the distance, but also signify the variation in lifestyle, social interaction, mobility, and language variation. These factors contributed to declining local dialects, emerging standardized or hybrid variation, and how language is used, changed, or preserved. Syam et al. (2023) investigated the linguistic interaction in multicultural urban societies. They revealed that in the cities where the interaction among ethnics, classes, and generations is more intense, the language serves as negotiation tools for social identities; the language users often shift their registers while combining local and national language variation as well as adapting to the communication styles (Wilczewski & Alon, 2022) in line with the social context. Moreover, in Indonesian context, the villagers or rural communities tend to use local dialects and informal variation while the urban communities tend to use semi-formal which indicates the role of urbanization or geographical differences (Haryani et al., 2025). The urbanization in some big cities has significantly declined the use of local dialects in urban centers where the youths prefer *Bahasa Indonesia* or Indonesian

language to local dialects when communicating with different interlocutors during their daily interaction (Jala et al., 2025). A trend phenomenon in Indonesia regarding the use of urban language known as "*South Jakarta* Language" or "Jaksel Language" resulted from code mixing and slang (Hasanah et al., 2020) apparently has led to modern lifestyle and sophisticated speakers compared to those non-*Jaksel* language users (Andriyana et al., 2021; Syamsi, 2022).

Rural communities that are relatively homogeneous and socially stable tend to preserve local dialects and traditional speech norms—due to dense social networks, internal interactions, and less pressure to assimilate into standard varieties. In contrast, the urban communities have heterogenous and dynamic social network resulting the language variation and standardization trend (Gordon, 2019). This transformation contributes to both advantageous and drawbacks circumstances. Standard variation facilitates cross-ethnic communication and promotes social mobility in urban societies. On the other hand, local dialects and traditional or non-standard variation is threatened leading to eradication of cultural identity and linguistic heritage of certain communities. Thus, strict policy regarding language preservation is essential (Jala et al., 2025) to avoid the dialect erosion especially when the youths no longer pass on their heritage to the next generation.

CONCLUSION

This chapter explored how social factors – social class, gender, age or generation, ethnicity and identity, and urban-rural context form and shape the language variation. It obviously defines language as complex social phenomenon as it serves not only as tool of communication but also as symbol of power, identity, and solidarity evolving in line with the dynamics within societies. In the context of social class, language reflects the

social stratification and prestigious status. The upper and middle social-class tend to maintain the standard variation to present their overt prestige – status, level of education, and power – while the lower social-class frequently use the covert prestige to show their solidarity and nativeness (Ario Sumilih et al., 2024; Bickerton, 1975; Zhang & Liang, 2024). This phenomenon demonstrates that language is not only as social structure products but also as resistance and affirmation of identity against dominant structures.

Meanwhile, gender dimension affects the language style and lexical choices, both offline and online interaction (Elsheikh et al., 2024). This domain also presents that language use can reflect the social construction between female and male. Studies revealed that female generally tend to be more sensitive to the standard language norm than male. They often use standard language due to politeness and prestige while male use non-standard language to emphasize their social authenticity, authority, and masculinity (Rizki et al., 2023). Age and generation emphasized that language variation is also temporal phenomenon. Teenagers' language, for instance, is full of innovation and often form new slang or vernacular which becomes symbol of generational solidarity (Ahmadi et al., 2024). In Indonesia, *Jaksel* language speakers are deemed more prestigious rather than non-*Jaksel* circle (Andriyana et al., 2021; Syamsi, 2022). Furthermore, social media and massive development of new technologies enhance the new language variation reflecting digital identity in young generation while the old generation maintains conventional form of language. This shifting identifies language as indicator of social change between generation.

Ethnicity, identity, and speech norm represents language as symbol of cultural identity and group's solidarity. The local language variation or ethnic language functions to strengthen the

social cohesion, keep the traditional values, and negotiate identity in multiethnic contexts (Aliyeva, 2023; Jumadi et al., 2024). Moreover, urban and rural area differences depict how social space also shapes the language variation. Urbans create dynamic language environment and tend to "levelling" while the villagers maintain more conservative and local forms (Andriyana et al., 2021; Jala et al., 2025; Syamsi, 2022).

All these dimensions emphasized language variation as direct reflection of heterogenous human. Language is unneutral; it implies social meanings and ideologies. Through language, a speaker builds, maintain, or even challenge the existing social structures. Thus, a comprehensive understanding on language use requires holistic approach – combining social dimension, culture, economy, and psychology – to enable people explore how languages live and adapt to social dynamics.

REFERENCES

Afriazi, R., Fauziah, A., & Fauzi Rachman, I. (2024). Diglosia dan bilingualisme sebagai fenomena berbahasa dalam bahasa tutur yang digunakan mahasiswa di lingkungan kampus. *Atmosfer: Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, Budaya, Dan Sosial Humaniora*, *2*(2), 307–317. https://doi.org/10.59024/ATMOSFER.V2I2.817

Ahmadi, Y., Yasmadi, Y., & Fitri, T. (2024). Sociolinguistics in the digital era: Minang language as cultural identity. *Leksika: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra Dan Pengajarannya*, *18*(2), 63. https://doi.org/10.30595/lks.v18i2.22990

Aliyeva, G. B. (2023). Language as a means of communication and social construction: Regarding the formation of our identity and shared culture. *Futurity Philosophy*, *2*(1), 4–13. https://doi.org/10.57125/FP.2023.03.30.01

Andriyana, A., Iswatiningsih, D., Mahmud, J., Yulianti, O. E., & Trang, T. T. T. (2021). Tiktok terhadap variasi bahasa

kolokial pada kalangan remaja indonesia (kajian etonolinguistik). *Fon : Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, *17*(1), 34–41. https://doi.org/10.25134/FON.V17I1.4193

Ario Sumilih, D., Ras, A., & Henri. (2024). Stratifikasi sosial dan variasi bahasa: narasi linguistik atas mobilitas sosial. *Indonesian Journal of Intellectual Publication*, *5*(1), 59–71. https://doi.org/10.51577/IJIPUBLICATION.V5I1.613

Astuti, T. (2014). Variasi bahasa dan tingkatan sosial masyarakat Jawa dan Sunda (Tinjauan teoritis dan deskriptif terhadap kasus penggunaan bahasa di masyarakat). Jurnal Perspektif Pendidikan, 8(1), 45-54.

Asriani, A., & Erfinawati, E. (2017). Analisis makna dalam ragam dialek lokal Aceh besar dalam bahasa Aceh. In Prosiding Seminar Nasional USM (Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 1- 10).

Bickerton, D. (1975). Peter Trudgill, The social differentiation of English in Norwich. (Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 13.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974. Pp. X + 211. *Journal of Linguistics*, *11*(2), 299–308. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022226700004631

Curry, A. C., Attanasio, G., Talat, Z., & Hovy, D. (2024). Classist tools: Social class correlates with performance in NLP. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics*, *1*, 12643–12655. https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/2024.acl-long.682

Elsheikh, O., Elmahdi, H., Ahmed, A., Balla, S., & Abdelrady, A. H. (2024). Gender variations in linguistic styles across online platforms: A thematic analysis. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation.* https://doi.org/10.32996/ijllt

Fakhira, R., & Amaly, N. (2024). “The Nuruls”: A sociolinguistic study of name enregisterment in indonesian

online discourse. *Alhadharah: Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah*, *23*(2), 213–226. https://doi.org/10.18592/alhadharah.v23i2.13815

Ghazanfar, M., Qadir, H., & Jahan, Dr. J. (2024). Age grading and linguistic change: investigating age-based language variation in different social contexts. *Advance Social Science Archive Journal*, *2*(4), 874–885. https://assajournal.com/index.php/36/article/view/113

Gondra, A. (2024). Linguistic variability across four generations of Basque Spanish speakers: from the regional preverbal double negation construction to the standard variant. *Journal of Language Contact*, *16*(4), 429–455. https://doi.org/10.1163/19552629-01604001

Gordon, M. J. (2019). Language variation and change in rural communities. *Annual Review of Linguistics*, *5*(Volume 5, 2019), 435–453. https://doi.org/10.1146/ANNUREV-LINGUISTICS-011817-045545/CITE/REFWORKS

Gurning, R. A., Sipayung, W. W., Sinurat, E., & Saragih, Y. S. (2024). Analisis sosiolinguistik: Perspektif bahasa dalam masyarakat. *Realisasi : Ilmu Pendidikan, Seni Rupa Dan Desain*, *1*(4), 238–245. https://doi.org/10.62383/REALISASI.V1I4.376

Haryani, S., Siva, W., Idham P, T. P., Naufal Fadli, M., Ramdhan, A., & Julianti, U. (2025). Sociolect variations in the utterances of rural and urban communities: A case study in cisata district and pandeglang city. *Jurnal Multidisiplin Sahombu*, *5*. https://doi.org/10.58471/jms.v5i04

Hasanah, N., Hudiyono, Y., & Agustian, J. F. (2020). Analisis variasi bahasa pada komunitas di jejaring sosial whatsapp: kajian sosiolinguistik. *Adjektiva: Educational Languages and Literature Studies*, *3*(2), 26–32. https://doi.org/10.30872/ADJEKTIVA.V3I2.1407

Hayati, R. (2021). Variasi bahasa dan kelas sosial. *Pena: Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan dan Teknologi*, 35(1), 48-54.

Jala, J., Idayanti, & Kusuma, S. A. (2025). Urbanization and dialect decline in Indonesia: a study of intergenerational language shift and policy gaps. *Lingua : Journal of Linguistics and Language*, *3*(3), 195–207. https://doi.org/10.61978/LINGUA.V3I3.997

Jackson, J. (2019). Introducing language and intercultural communication. Routledge.

Jumadi, K., Taqwiem, A., Mu'in, F., Noortyani, R., Listia, R., & Amelia, R. (2024). Language choice in multilingual speech communities: A sociolinguistic study in the wetland area, Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan. *Register Journal*, *17*(2), 404–434. https://doi.org/10.18326/REGISTER.V17I2.404-434

Ma, Y., Peng, Y., & Zhu, Y. (2025). *Word Embeddings Track Social Group Changes Across 70 Years in China*. https://arxiv.org/pdf/2504.12327

Mamentu, R. A., Karamoy, O. H. S., & Karouw, S. M. (2022). Variasi bahasa berdasarkan gender di Perumahan Watutumou Permai. *JURNAL ELEKTRONIK FAKULTAS SASTRA UNIVERSITAS SAM RATULANGI*, *34*. https://ejournal.unsrat.ac.id/v3/index.php/jefs/article/view/40745

Maulidia, N., Fitri, A., Salsabilla, A., Irvan, A. R., & Santoso, C. R. (2025). Perbedaan bahasa laki-laki dan perempuan dalam mengomentari konten perselingkuhan pada tiktok akun @kuatbaca.official. *Jurnal Cahaya Edukasi*, *2*(4), 128–135. https://doi.org/10.63863/JCE.V2I4.158

Meyerhoff, M. (2018). Introducing sociolinguistics. In *Introducing Sociolinguistics* (3rd ed.). Taylor and Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429507922/INTRODUCING-SOCIOLINGUISTICS-MIRIAM-MEYERHOFF/RIGHTS-AND-PERMISSIONS

Michnowicz, J. (2025). Language change across real and apparent-time: Case studies from Yucatan Spanish. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, *19*(3), e70015. https://doi.org/10.1111/LNC3.70015;JOURNAL:JOURNAL:1749818X

Pratama, D., Siswanto, A., & Faoziyah, N. (2022). Variasi bahasa remaja dalam penggunaan media sosial. *KONFIKS: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra & Pengajaran*, *9*(1), 67. https://doi.org/10.26618/jk/5455

Purba, A., Saragih, R., Saragih, D. A., Sitompul, Y. S., & Hutagalung, A. (2025). Ragam bahasa dan identitas pada masyarakat tutur di etnik Batak Toba : Analisis sosiolinguistik. *Kopula: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Pendidikan*, *7*(1), 269–278. https://doi.org/10.29303/kopula.v7i1.6422

Rahmawati, A., & Djuharie, O. S. (2025). A sociolinguistic analysis of language style differences between male and female students in Whatsapp group. *Jejak Digital: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin*, *1*(4), 1608–1613. https://doi.org/10.63822/KMTA2705

Runqing Liu, Xu Wen (2006). Linguistics: *A New Course Book*. Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Rizki, D., Kurniawati, K., Hanif, H., & Kiram, M. Z. (2023). Gender and the use of local language in urban community. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik Malikussaleh (JSPM)*, *4*(1), 36–48. https://doi.org/10.29103/JSPM.V4I1.10130

Syam, C., Seli, S., & Abdu, W. J. (2023). Dynamics of language interaction in multicultural urban communities: Analysis of socio-cultural linguistic environment. *Society*, *11*(2), 575–588. https://doi.org/10.33019/society.v11i2.628

Syamsi, V. (2022). Identity construction through language use (a case study of Jakartanese personal pronoun). *International*

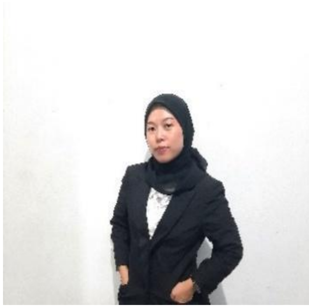
Journal of Current Science Research and Review, *05*(07). https://doi.org/10.47191/IJCSRR/V5-I7-52

Travis, C. E., & Gan, Q. (2025). The intersection of ethnicity and social class in language variation and change. *Language Variation and Change*, *37*(2), 137–160. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954394525100537

Wilczewski, M., & Alon, I. (2022). Language and communication in international students' adaptation: a bibliometric and content analysis review. *Higher Education 2022 85:6*, *85*(6), 1235–1256. https://doi.org/10.1007/S10734-022-00888-8

Zhang, Y., & Liang, Y. (2024). Different language variants and social class. *International Journal of Education and Humanities*, *16*(2), 416–418. https://doi.org/10.54097/1CAB0C65

AUTHOR'S PROFILE



Retno Wulan, S.Pd., M.Pd., is an English lecturer at Universitas Bangka Belitung in Bangka Belitung Province, Indonesia. She completed both her bachelor and master degrees at Universitas Jambi, Indonesia majoring English education program study, faculty of teacher training and education. She actively enrolled in various English education programs and trainings as well as translation program both in formal and non-formal environments. She has trained English teachers who practice their teaching in elementary schools engaging with young learners and professionals who need to improve their English capabilities in working atmospheres. Moreover, she actively engaged in non-governmental organizations protecting forests and the indigenous people living in and around the forests while voicing their rights to live over their livelihood. The author has very strong interests in Pedagogy, Teaching English to Young Learners, and Global Englishes or World Englishes.

CHAPTER 4
CONTEXT AND SITUATIONAL LANGUAGE USE

Iin Baroroh Ma'arif
Universitas KH. A. Wahab Hasbullah, Jombang
E-mail: iinmaarif@unwaha.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Human communication extends far beyond the literal meaning of words. A simple utterance such as "Can you open the window?" can function as a question about ability, a polite request, or even a command, depending on who speaks, where it is spoken, and under what circumstances. This illustrates a fundamental principle of language: meaning is context-dependent. Without contextual information, utterances remain ambiguous, incomplete, or misleading.

The importance of context has long been acknowledged in linguistic theory, yet its role has become increasingly prominent in contemporary communication landscapes. Globalization, digital technology, and multilingual interaction have expanded the range of communicative situations in which individuals participate daily. Social media conversations, online classrooms, virtual meetings, and AI-mediated interactions all rely heavily on contextual interpretation despite lacking traditional physical cues. Consequently, understanding how context shapes situational language use is crucial for linguists, educators, communication specialists, and technology designers.

Situational language use refers to the ways speakers adapt linguistic choices according to participants, setting, purpose, medium, and cultural expectations. These adaptations involve lexical selection, syntactic variation, pragmatic strategies, politeness conventions, discourse organization, and multimodal

resources such as gesture or emoji. Studying situational language use therefore offers insight into how language functions as a social practice rather than merely a structural system.

This chapter discusses the concept of context, types of situational factors influencing language use, theoretical frameworks in pragmatics and discourse studies, and implications for communication and language learning in contemporary settings. It begins by defining context and outlining its major dimensions. It then examines situational factors shaping linguistic behavior, followed by theoretical perspectives from pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and discourse studies. The chapter continues with discussion of context in digital communication, language learning, and inclusive educational environments. Finally, contemporary issues and research directions are explored before concluding remarks are offered.

CONCEPTUALIZING CONTEXT IN LANGUAGE USE

A. Defining Context

In linguistic studies, context refers to all external and internal factors surrounding a communicative event that contribute to meaning interpretation. It includes physical surroundings, social relationships, cultural expectations, and prior discourse. Rather than being peripheral, context is now recognized as integral to meaning-making.

Modern pragmatic theories emphasize that linguistic expressions encode underspecified meanings that must be enriched through contextual inference (Haugh, 2021). Consequently, meaning is not simply transmitted from speaker to listener but jointly constructed through shared contextual knowledge.

B. Types of Context

In linguistics, context is often divided into:

1. Linguistic Context (Co-text)

The surrounding words, sentences, or discourse that frame an utterance. Co-text provides cues for reference resolution, ellipsis interpretation, and coherence building. The examples of linguistic context (Co-text) are:

- *Pronoun Reference*
  Example: “Renata loses her book. She is looking for it.”
  Co-text function: The sentence tells us ‘she’ refers to Maria and ‘it’ refers to the book.
- *Ambiguous Word Meaning*
  Example: “She sat by the bank to read a novel.”
  Co-text function: The phrase ‘sat by’ suggests bank = riverbank, not a financial institution.
- *Ellipsis (Omitted Words)*
  Example: A: Would you like banana or apple? B: Apple, please.
  Co-text function: The omitted phrase ‘I would like’ is understood from the prior sentence.
- *Lexical Clarification*
  Example: “The boy was barking with laughter.”
  Co-text function: The phrase ‘with laughter’ clarifies that ‘barking’ is metaphorical, not literal.
- *Discourse Connection*
  Example: “James failed the exam. Therefore, he must repeat the course.”
  Co-text function: ‘Therefore’ signals a cause–effect relationship created by the co-text.
- *Meaning of Deictic Words*
  Example: “Put it there.”
  Co-text function: Previous discourse specifies what ‘it’ is and where ‘there’ refers to.

- *Politeness Meaning*

  Example: “Can you close the window? It’s very cold in here.”

  Co-text function: The sentence shows a request, not a question about ability.

- *Idiom Interpretation*

  Example: “After months of preparation, he finally broke the ice during the meeting.”

  Co-text function: The surrounding phrase clarifies the idiom means initiating conversation, not literal ice.

- *Contrastive Meaning*

  Example: “Jhon is rich, but unhappy.”

  Co-text function: ‘But’ signals contrast between wealth and emotional state.

- *Time Reference*

  Example: “We’ll finish the report tomorrow. It must be submitted by noon.”

  Co-text function: ‘It’ refers to the report, established by prior text.

2. Situational Context

This is about the physical environment in which communication occurs, including time, place, participants, and ongoing activity that influence how language is used and understood. Situational context influences deixis, turn-taking, and politeness choices.

In other word, situational context refers to who is speaking, where, when, to whom, and for what purpose, all of which shape how an utterance is interpreted.

Examples of Situational Context

- *Classroom Setting*

  A teacher stands in front of students during a lesson. Utterance: “Open your books to page 25.”

Contextual meaning: Understood as an instruction because of the classroom setting and teacher–student roles.

- *Hospital Setting*

  A nurse speaks to a patient. Utterance: “Does it hurt here?”

  Contextual meaning: A medical question based on clinical examination.

- *Restaurant*

  A customer talks to a waiter. Utterance: “I’ll have the grilled chicken.”

  Contextual meaning: Recognized as placing an order.

- *Online Meeting*

  A lecturer in a Zoom class. Utterance: “Please mute your microphones.”

  Contextual meaning: A technical instruction shaped by the digital setting.

- *Job Interview*

  Interviewer to candidate. Utterance: “Can you tell us about your strengths?”

  Contextual meaning: A formal evaluative question.

- *Emergency Situation*

  Fire alarm ringing in a building. Utterance: “Everyone out, now!”

  Contextual meaning: A command shaped by urgency.

- *Market Bargaining*

  Buyer to seller. Utterance: “Can you make it cheaper?”

  Contextual meaning: A negotiation act.

3. Social Context

Social Context showing how social relationships, status, cultural norms, and group identity influence language use and interpretation. This context shapes formality, honorifics, and interactional styles.

Examples of Social Context:

- *Formal vs Informal Speech*
  Someone talks to a professor: "Could you please explain this concept again, Professor?"
  Someone talks to a friend: "Can you explain that again?"
  Social context effect: Social status and role relationship determine level of politeness.
- *Power Relationship*
  A manager speaks to an employee: "Submit the report by Tuesday."
  Social meaning: A directive shaped by hierarchical authority.
- *Solidarity and Intimacy*
  Dialog of Two close friends. Utterance: "You've got this!"
  Social meaning: Encouragement showing emotional closeness.
- *Gendered Language Use*
  In mixed-gender discussion group. Utterance: "Let's hear his opinion first."
  Social meaning: Reflects awareness of gender representation.
- *Professional Jargon*
  When Doctors discussing a patient. Utterance: "BP is 110 over 70, unstable."
  Social meaning: Shared professional identity allows technical shorthand.
- *Group Identity (In-group Language)*
  Situation: Teenagers in a peer group. Utterance: "That movie was lit!"
  Social meaning: Slang marks group membership.
- *Politeness Norms*
  Situation: Asking a stranger for directions.
  Utterance: "Excuse me, could you help me find the bus station?"

Social meaning: Politeness reflects social distance.

- *Social Expectations*

  Dialog of Parent to teenager. Utterance: “Be home by nine.”

  Social meaning: Parental authority and family norms.

4. Cultural Context

Cultural Context showing how shared beliefs, values, traditions, and cultural knowledge shape how language is understood or used to interpret meaning. Cultural context is essential in intercultural and multilingual communication.

Examples of Cultural Context

- *Culture-Specific Greetings*

  Indonesia: “Sudah makan?” (means: A friendly greeting, not a real question about food.)

  Cultural meaning: The function of the utterance depends on cultural convention.

- *Idioms and Proverbs*

  English: “The early bird catches the worm.”

  Indonesian: “Sekali merengkuh dayung, dua tiga pulau terlampaui.”

  Cultural meaning: Understanding requires shared cultural knowledge.

- *Politeness Systems*

  Situation: Speaking to elders in Javanese culture, the utterance uses krama instead of ngoko.

  Cultural meaning: Language choice reflects cultural respect norms.

- *Religious Expressions*

  “Insha’Allah” in Muslim cultures; “Praise the Lord” in Christian communities

  Cultural meaning: Religious worldview embedded in daily speech.

- *Symbolic References*

Utterance: “He is the Garuda of the team.”

Cultural meaning: Requires knowledge that Garuda symbolizes strength in Indonesian culture.

- *Humor*

  Situation: Local joke using wordplay in Bahasa Indonesia.

  Cultural meaning: Only understandable to those sharing linguistic-cultural background.

- *Taboos*

  Situation: Avoiding direct mention of death in some cultures.

  Instead saying: “She has passed away.”

  Cultural meaning: Reflects cultural sensitivity norms.

- *Dress and Address Terms*

  Utterance: “Bapak/Ibu” instead of first names.

  Cultural meaning: Cultural respect markers.

- *Time Perception*

  Utterance: “Jam karet.”

  Cultural meaning: Refers to flexible time culture in Indonesia.

5. Cognitive Context

Cognitive Context has meaning in how mental processes, background knowledge, expectations, and prior experiences influence how language is interpreted. Cognitive context supports inference, implicature, and relevance-based interpretation.

The examples of Cognitive Context:

- *Prior Knowledge Activation*

  Situation: A lecturer says: “Remember Bloom’s taxonomy?”

  Cognitive context: Students recall prior learning about Bloom’s levels to understand the reference.

- *Inference Making*

Utterance: "The baby finally stopped crying."
Cognitive context: Listeners infer the baby was crying before, even though it is not stated.

- *Schema-Based Understanding*
  Situation: At a restaurant: "Can I see the menu?"
  Cognitive context: The listener uses the "restaurant schema" to understand the expected sequence of actions.
- *Predicting Meaning*
  Utterance: "If you finish early…"
  Cognitive context: The listener anticipates a conditional instruction based on prior experience.
- *Resolving Ambiguity*
  Utterance: "The student saw the teacher with the telescope."
  Cognitive context: The listener mentally tests possible interpretations to choose the most logical one.
- *Memory-Based Reference*
  Utterance: "As we discussed last week…"
  Cognitive context: Understanding depends on recalling previous discussion.
- *Metaphor Interpretation*
  Utterance: "Time is money."
  Cognitive context: Listeners map abstract concept (time) onto familiar economic experience.
- *Expectation and Surprise*
  Utterance: "The exam was difficult."
  Cognitive context: Meaning depends on students' prior expectation that the exam would be difficult.
- *Attention and Salience*
  Situation: In a noisy classroom, teacher says: "Listen carefully."
  Cognitive context: Students shift attention to process important information.

- *Learning Transfer*
  Utterance: "This rule works just like the one we used in English."
  Cognitive context: Learners connect new knowledge with stored mental representations.

C. Context as Dynamic and Negotiated

Early views treated context as a static background. Contemporary approaches instead emphasize that context is continuously constructed and negotiated during interaction. Speakers create contextual frames through topic introduction, discourse markers, and reference to shared knowledge. Listeners reciprocally interpret and update contextual understanding. Therefore, context is both a resource for communication and an outcome of communicative practice (Dynel, 2018).

SITUATIONAL FACTORS SHAPING LANGUAGE USE

Situational language use involves strategic adaptation of linguistic behavior depending on circumstances. Several core situational factors have been widely identified.

a. Participants and Social Roles

Language use varies according to who is speaking and their relationship to others (teacher–student, peer–peer, superior–subordinate). Differences in age, status, familiarity, and institutional roles influence choices of address terms, politeness strategies, and degrees of formality.

For example: a teacher's feedback to a student typically employs supportive politeness and mitigated directives, whereas peer-to-peer interaction may allow informal language and humor. In multilingual settings, code-switching may signal solidarity or authority depending on situational cues.

Politeness research demonstrates that speakers constantly manage face needs in relation to social roles and expectations

(Kádár & Haugh, 2021). Thus, situational role relations strongly determine pragmatic choices.

b. Setting and Physical Environment

Communication differs in formal meetings, classrooms, family gatherings, online platforms, or public spaces. Physical arrangement affects turn-taking patterns, eye contact, and multimodal expression. In digital settings, physical cues are replaced by interface features, emojis, or textual timing signals.

For example: online classroom discussions often require explicit turn-allocation strategies and written politeness markers to compensate for reduced physical context.

c. Communicative Purpose

The intention behind communication shapes linguistic form. Informing, persuading, instructing, entertaining, or negotiating each determines lexical selection, sentence structure, and discourse organization. Purpose also determines whether directness or indirectness is preferred.

A lecturer explaining a concept uses elaborated explanations and hedging, while a manager giving instructions may employ concise imperatives. Purpose thus guides situational adaptation.

d. Medium and Mode of Communication

Spoken, written, and digital communication differ in immediacy, permanence, and feedback mechanisms. Digital modes often blend spoken and written features, creating hybrid pragmatic conventions (Seargeant & Tagg, 2019).

Messaging apps encourage brief utterances, emojis, and abbreviations, while academic emails require formality and explicit politeness. Each medium establishes situational norms that users must learn.

e. Cultural Expectations

Cultural conventions determine appropriate speech acts, politeness degrees, and turn-taking behavior. Misinterpretations occur when speakers transfer norms across cultures. Intercultural pragmatics research highlights how cultural context interacts with situational demands to shape communication (Locher & Graham, 2019).

f. Power and Institutional Context

Institutional settings such as schools, courts, and workplaces impose role-governed discourse patterns. Power asymmetry affects who initiates topics, controls turns, and evaluates contributions. Awareness of institutional context is essential for effective participation.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CONTEXTUAL LANGUAGE USE

a. Speech Act Theory

Speech Act Theory explains how utterances perform actions such as requesting, promising, apologizing, or ordering. The success of a speech act depends on contextual conditions, known as felicity conditions. A request made without appropriate authority or situational relevance may fail pragmatically.

In educational contexts, understanding speech acts helps explain teacher directives, student questions, and classroom negotiation.

b. Gricean Pragmatics and Implicature

Grice's Cooperative Principle proposes that conversational participants follow maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. When speakers appear to violate these maxims,

listeners infer implied meanings or implicatures beyond literal words.

Context plays a decisive role in inferencing. An utterance such as "It's cold here" may imply a request to close a window depending on situational cues.

c. Relevance Theory

Relevance Theory argues that communication involves inferential processes guided by expectations of optimal relevance. Listeners combine linguistic input with contextual assumptions to derive intended meaning. Context selection is thus dynamic and cognitive.

d. Sociolinguistic Perspective

Sociolinguistics investigates how language variation reflects social identity and situational context. Style-shifting, register variation, and code-switching are examples of situational adaptation.

In multilingual educational environments, learners shift between languages to signal identity, manage comprehension, or express solidarity.

e. Discourse and Interactional Analysis

Conversation Analysis examines how participants manage turn-taking, repair, and sequencing in interaction. Context emerges through these interactional practices. Discourse analysis further explores how broader contexts such as ideology and institutional norms shape communication patterns.

f. Digital Pragmatics

Recent studies highlights how context operates in virtual environments where physical co-presence is absent and replaced by textual or visual signals. Digital pragmatics studies how users

establish contextual frames through emojis, hashtags, timing, and platform conventions (Herring, 2024). This field is particularly relevant for contemporary communication research.

CONTEXT IN DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

Digital environments have transformed situational language use. Online communication lacks physical cues yet offers new semiotic resources. Context must be constructed through textual and visual signals.

a. Social Media Interaction

Social media platforms create unique situational norms. Users interpret posts based on shared knowledge of platform conventions, community practices, and intertextual references. Humor, irony, and offense are highly context-dependent, often leading to misinterpretation (Tagg, Seargeant, & Brown, 2020).

b. Online Learning Contexts

Virtual classrooms require explicit contextualization strategies. Teachers must provide clear instructions, scaffolding, and feedback to compensate for reduced situational cues. Students develop pragmatic competence for online participation, including netiquette and digital politeness (Lee & Drajati, 2023).

c. AI-Mediated Communication

AI assistants introduce new communicative partners. Users must infer system capabilities and limitations through interaction. Designers must program contextual awareness to enable naturalistic communication. This emerging area highlights the intersection of pragmatics, technology, and human-computer interaction.

d. Multimodality and Context

Digital communication integrates text, audio, visuals, and gesture. Multimodal cues contribute to contextual meaning-making. For example, an emoji can signal irony or soften criticism. Thus, multimodality expands traditional notions of situational context.

CONTEXT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Understanding situational language use is essential in language education. Learners need not only grammatical knowledge but also pragmatic competence — the ability to use language appropriately across contexts.

In modern classrooms, especially technology-enhanced learning environments, students encounter diverse communicative situations: video conferencing, chat-based discussions, collaborative digital tasks, and multicultural interaction. Teaching contextual language use helps learners develop: awareness of formality and politeness norms, ability to interpret implied meaning, skills for adapting language across media and sensitivity to cultural differences

Context-based and task-based learning approaches are increasingly adopted to foster authentic communication skills.

a. Pragmatic Competence

Language learners must acquire not only grammar and vocabulary but also pragmatic competence — the ability to use language appropriately in context. Failure to understand contextual norms often leads to pragmatic failure despite linguistic accuracy (Taguchi, 2016).

b. Context-Based Pedagogy

Contextualized teaching methods emphasize authentic communicative tasks. Role plays, simulations, project-based

learning, and digital interaction expose learners to diverse situational contexts.

c. Instruction in Pragmatics

Research shows that explicit instruction in pragmatic norms improves learners' ability to perform speech acts and interpret implicatures in various situations (Nguyen & Taguchi, 2023).

d. Intercultural Communicative Competence

Global communication demands sensitivity to cultural contexts. Language education increasingly integrates intercultural pragmatics to prepare learners for cross-cultural interaction.

e. Inclusive and Accessible Communication

Inclusive education requires adapting communication for learners with diverse needs. Simplified instructions, visual cues, and multimodal materials support contextual comprehension. Context-aware educational technologies enhance accessibility for diverse learners.

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AND EMERGING TRENDS

Contemporary research on context and situational language use increasingly emphasizes the dynamic, interactional nature of meaning-making in real-world communication. One major issue is the growing recognition that traditional, static models of context are insufficient for explaining how meaning emerges in fluid and rapidly changing communicative situations. Current studies argue that context is co-constructed by participants moment by moment, shaped by situational variables such as institutional roles, power relations, technological mediation, and immediate interactional goals. For example, in classroom discourse, teachers may shift from authoritative to facilitative

language depending on students' responses, demonstrating how situational context continuously reshapes linguistic choices (Seedhouse, 2004; van Dijk, 2008).

Another prominent issue concerns the impact of digital and mediated communication on situational language use. Online interactions—such as social media discussions, video conferencing, and instant messaging—introduce new contextual dimensions, including platform norms, multimodality, and reduced physical co-presence. These environments blur traditional boundaries between spoken and written language and require speakers to rely on emojis, turn-taking conventions, or visual cues to negotiate meaning. For instance, politeness strategies in email or WhatsApp communication often differ from face-to-face interaction, highlighting how situational context adapts to technological affordances (Herring, 2013; Androutsopoulos, 2015).

An emerging trend in this field is the increased use of multimodal and discourse-based approaches to analyze situational language use. Rather than focusing solely on verbal language, recent research examines how gesture, gaze, visual artifacts, and digital interfaces contribute to contextual meaning-making. For example, studies of instructional settings show that teachers' gestures and visual materials play a crucial role in shaping learners' interpretation of spoken explanations, particularly in inclusive or multilingual classrooms (Jewitt, Bezemer, & O'Halloran, 2016). This trend reflects a broader shift toward understanding context as inherently multimodal and embodied.

A further emerging trend is the growing attention to context-sensitive pedagogy and pragmatic competence in language education. Researchers increasingly argue that effective communication depends not only on linguistic knowledge but also on learners' ability to interpret and respond

appropriately to situational demands. As a result, there is a shift toward teaching practices that emphasize authentic scenarios, role-based interaction, and situational awareness. For example, teaching speech acts such as requests or refusals through context-rich simulations helps learners understand how meaning and appropriateness vary across social and institutional settings (Taguchi, 2015).

Overall, contemporary issues and emerging trends in context and situational language use reflect a broader movement toward viewing language as social action embedded in dynamic environments. By addressing the challenges posed by digital communication, multimodality, and contextual variability, current research advances more nuanced theoretical models while also informing context-aware practices in education and professional communication.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The findings on context and situational language use have important implications for both linguistic research and applied practice. From a research perspective, the study reinforces the view that meaning emerges through interaction and cannot be fully explained without considering situational factors such as participant roles, communicative goals, and sociocultural norms. This supports pragmatic and discourse-based theories that conceptualize context as dynamic and negotiated rather than fixed. Future research should therefore move beyond sentence-level analysis and examine how speakers adjust their language in response to shifting situational conditions during real-time interaction (van Dijk, 2008; Gee, 2014).

Theoretically, these findings suggest the need to integrate situational context more explicitly into models of language use. Traditional competence-based approaches may overlook how meaning is shaped by power relations, institutional settings, and

interlocutor expectations. For example, the same request form may be interpreted as polite in a peer-to-peer interaction but inappropriate in a hierarchical institutional context. Future studies could explore how situational, social, and cognitive contexts interact using ethnographic or multimodal approaches to capture context-sensitive language use across settings (Taguchi, 2015).

Methodologically, the emphasis on situational language use highlights the importance of collecting data from authentic communicative contexts. Rather than relying solely on decontextualized tasks, researchers are encouraged to analyze naturally occurring discourse, such as classroom interactions, workplace communication, or digital conversations. For instance, classroom discourse analysis can reveal how teachers modify instructions based on students' responses and situational constraints, providing richer insights into context-dependent meaning-making (Seedhouse, 2004).

From a practical perspective, the findings underscore the importance of incorporating situational context into language teaching and professional communication training. Instruction that focuses mainly on grammatical accuracy may not adequately develop learners' pragmatic competence. Educators should therefore use role-plays, scenario-based activities, and authentic materials to help learners understand how language choices vary across situations. For example, teaching speech acts such as requests or apologies through context-rich scenarios can enhance learners' ability to communicate appropriately in real-world interactions (Kasper & Rose, 2002).

Overall, aligning research and practice with a contextualized understanding of situational language use promotes a more holistic view of language as social action. Such an approach not only advances theoretical models of meaning-making but also provides practical guidance for improving

communication effectiveness in educational, institutional, and professional contexts.

CONCLUSION

Context and situational language use lie at the heart of human communication. Meaning arises through dynamic interaction between linguistic forms and contextual knowledge. As communication increasingly spans digital, cultural, and institutional boundaries, contextual awareness becomes ever more critical. Understanding how context shapes language use enables more effective communication, better language education, and more inclusive interaction in contemporary society.

REFERENCES

Barron, A., Gu, Y., & Steen, G. (Eds.). (2017). The Routledge Handbook of Pragmatics. Routledge.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77–101.

Culpeper, J., Haugh, M., & Kádár, D. (2017). The Palgrave Handbook of Linguistic politeness.

Dijk, T. A. van (2008). Discourse and context: A sociocognitive approach. Cambridge University Press.

Dynel, M. (2018). Pragmatics and Discourse: A Dialogic Perspective. Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, R. (2015). Understanding second language acquisition. Oxford University Press.

García, C., & Wei, L. (2025). Translanguaging and contextual meaning-making in digital education. Applied Linguistics, Advance online publication.

Gee, J. P. (2014). An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method. Routledge.

Haugh, M. (2021). Implicature and Inference in Language Use. Cambridge University Press.

Herring, S. (2024). Digital pragmatics and multimodal context. Discourse, Context & Media, 55, 100700.

Herring, S. C. (2013). Discourse in Web 2.0: Familiar, reconfigured, and emergent. The Handbook of Discourse Analysis. Wiley-Blackwell.

Jewitt, C., Bezemer, J., & O'Halloran, K. (2016). Introducing multimodality. Routledge.

Kádár, D., & Haugh, M. (2021). Understanding Politeness (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Kasper, G., & Rose, K. R. (2002). Pragmatic development in a second language. Blackwell.

Lee, J., & Drajati, N. (2023). Pragmatics in online language learning contexts. System, 114, 102995.

Locher, M., & Graham, S. (2019). Interpersonal Pragmatics. De Gruyter.

Mayer, R. E. (2020). Multimedia learning (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Nguyen, T., & Taguchi, N. (2023). Contextualized pragmatics instruction in EFL classrooms. TESOL Quarterly, 57(3), 987–1010.

Pérez-Sabater, C. (2022). Context and pragmatic competence in digital communication. Journal of Pragmatics, 192, 1–14.

Pütz, M., & Aertselaer, J. (2008). Developing contrastive pragmatics. Mouton de Gruyter.

Seargeant, P., & Tagg, C. (2019). The Language of Social Media. Palgrave Macmillan.

Seedhouse, P. (2004). The interactional architecture of the language classroom. Blackwell.

Tagg, C., Seargeant, P., & Brown, A. (2020). Taking Offence on Social Media. Palgrave.

Taguchi, N. (2015). Instructed pragmatics at a glance. Language Teaching, 48(1), 1–50.

Taguchi, N. (2016). Context, Individual Differences and Pragmatic Competence. Multilingual Matters.

Tomlinson, B. (2018). Materials development for language learning and teaching. Cambridge University Press.

Yusoff, M. S. B. (2019). Cognitive load theory and instructional design. Medical Education, 53(6), 556–558.

AUTHOR'S PROFILE

Iin Baroroh Ma'arif

is a lecturer and active writer at Universitas KH. A. Wahab Hasbullah (UNWAHA) Jombang, specializing in linguistics, grammar, and language education. She earned her Master's degree in English Language Education from Universitas Negeri Malang, where she deepened her expertise in English language education. Her academic focus lies in both teaching and research, particularly in developing applicable grammar materials that enhance the effectiveness of language learning. She is also dedicated to creating innovative learning media designed to support beginner English learners.

CHAPTER 5
PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONETIC VARIATIONS

Afdaleni
Universitas Mohammad Natsir Bukittinggi
E-mail: afdaleni_09@yahoo.com

INTRODUCTION

Understanding phonological and phonetic variations is essential for linguists, language teachers, and speech therapists, as it helps them to better comprehend the complexities of human communication. By recognizing the factors that influence these variations, we can appreciate the diversity of languages and improve communication across different cultures and communities. Phonological and phonetics variations refer to the differences in sound patterns and pronunciation within a language. These variations can be influenced by geographical, social, and individual factors, shaping the way people communicate and interact with one another.

Languages are complex systems that exhibit variations in sound patterns and pronunciation, reflecting the diversity of human communication. Phonological variations refer to the differences in sound patterns, such as the way words are pronounced, stressed, or intoned. Phonetics, on the other hand, is the study of the physical properties of speech sounds, including their production, transmission, and perception These variations can be observed at different levels, including geographical, social, and individual. Geographical variations, also known as dialectal variations, occur due to differences in regional accents and pronunciation. For example, the pronunciation of "tomato" differs significantly between

American English (/təˈmeɪtoʊ/) and British English (/təˈmɑːtəʊ/) (Ladefoged, 2001).

Social factors, such as socioeconomic status, education, and occupation, also influence phonological variations. Sociolectal variations can be observed in the way people from different social backgrounds pronounce words, with some using more standard pronunciation and others using more non-standard forms (Trudgill, 2000). Additionally, individual factors, such as personal characteristics, experiences, and habits, can result in idiolectal variations, making each person's speech unique.

In sociolinguistics, Phonological Variations and Phonetics Variations are two related but distinct concepts in linguistics. Phonological variations in sociolinguistics refer to the differences in sound patterns and pronunciation within a language, often influenced by geographical, social, or individual factors. These variations affect the sound system of a language, including the distribution and patterning of sounds. In phonological variation, there is a difference between pronouncing "cot" and "caught" as /kɑt/ vs. /kɔt/. It is a phonological variation, as it affects the sound pattern of the language. On the other hand, phonetics variations refer to the physical differences in the production and perception of speech sounds, such as differences in articulation, acoustic properties, or auditory perception. In phonetics variation, there is the difference between pronouncing "p" in "pat" with a more aspirated [pʰ] vs. unaspirated [p]. It is a phonetic variation, as it affects the physical production of the sound.

The following illustration is presented to show the difference between Phonological variation and phonetic variation.

- Phonological variation: The difference between pronouncing "cot" and "caught" as /kɑt/ vs. /kɔt/ is a

phonological variation, as it affects the sound pattern of the language.

- Phonetic variation: The difference between pronouncing "p" in "pat" with a more aspirated [pʰ] vs. an unaspirated [p] is a phonetic variation, as it affects the physical production of the sound.

PHONOLOGICAL VARIATIONS

Phonological variations can be categorized into three main types of variations: Dialectal variations, Sociolectal variations and Idiolectal variations.

1. Dialectal variations.

   Dialectal variations, such as geographical or regional differences in pronunciation, are a common source of phonological variation. Dialects are varieties of a language that are spoken in specific regions or communities, and they often have distinct pronunciation patterns. These occur due to geographical or regional differences. Example :

   - People from different regions may pronounce words differently, as the examples below.
   - "tomato" is pronounced as /təˈmeɪtoʊ/ in American English and /təˈmɑːtəʊ/ in British English (Ladefoged, 2001).
   - "Coot" (bird) is pronounced differently in the US (/kuːt/) and UK (/kʊt/).
   - In some parts of the US (like New York), "coffee" sounds like "cawfee" (/ˈkɔfi/), while in other areas, it's more like "kahfee" (/ˈkɑfi/).
   - In Indonesia, the word "kamu" (you) is pronounced differently in Javanese ("kowe") and Balinese ("cai").

2. Sociolectal variations.

   These variations are influenced by social factors such as socioeconomic status, education, and occupation. These are leading to sociolectal variations. These variations can be observed in the way people from different social backgrounds pronounce words. Example:

   - The pronunciation of "ask" varies between /æsk/ and /æks/, with the former being more
   - common in formal or educated speech (Trudgill, 2000).
   - In some communities, people from higher socioeconomic backgrounds might use more standard pronunciation, while those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds might use more non-standard forms.
   - In the US, people from higher socioeconomic backgrounds might pronounce "dance" with a more standard /æ/ sound, while some working-class speakers might say /dæns/ with a different vowel sound.
   - In some communities, people might use "ain't" (non-standard) vs. "isn't" (standard), depending on their social group.
   - In Indonesia, using "aku" vs. "saya" (both mean "I") can depend on the level of formality or social context.

3. Idiolectal variations

   Idiolectal variations are kinds of Individual differences in pronunciation as other source of phonological variation. Idiolects are the unique speech patterns of individuals, which can be influenced by personal characteristics, experiences, and habits. Idiolectal variations can be observed in the way people pronounce words, use vocabulary, and structure their sentences. Example:

- Some people might pronounce "s" as "th" (e.g., "thith" instead of "this"), a phenomenon known as th-fronting (Crystal, 2008).
- Someone might consistently pronounce "s" as "th" (e.g., "thith" instead of "this") due to a personal speech pattern.
- A person might have a unique way of stressing words or using pauses in their speech.
- A bilingual person might mix sounds from both languages when speaking one of them (e.g., pronouncing "v" as "b" in English due to influence from their native language).

PHONOLOGICAL PROCESS OF THE CHANGES OF SOUND

There are three processes of the changes of sound phonologically. These processes help us understand how sounds change in connected speech, making language more efficient and natural-sounding. They are :

1. Assimilation (e.g., "handbag" -> /hæmbæg/): Assimilation is a phonological process where one sound changes to become more like a nearby sound. In this example, the /n/ sound in "handbag" changes to /m/ because it's followed by the /b/ sound, which is a bilabial consonant (made with the lips). The /n/ sound, which is an alveolar consonant (made with the tongue on the alveolar ridge), changes to /m/, which is also a bilabial consonant, making it easier to pronounce with the following /b/ sound.
2. Elision (e.g., "laboratory" -> /læbrətɔri/): Elision is a phonological process where a sound is omitted or deleted. In this example, the /o/ sound in "laboratory" is often dropped in casual speech, resulting in /læbrətɔri/. This

makes the word easier to pronounce and is a common phenomenon in many languages.

3. Linking (e.g., "go away" -> /goʊwəˈweɪ/): Linking is a phonological process where a sound is added between two words to connect them. In this example, the /w/ sound is added between "go" and "away" to make the transition smoother. This is often called "intrusive /w/" or "linking /w/". It's a common phenomenon in English, especially when a word ends with a vowel sound, and the next word starts with a vowel sound.

PHONETIC VARIATIONS

Phonetic variations can be categorized into three main types. These three branches of phonetics work together to help us understand the complex process of speech production and perception.

1. Articulatory Phonetics

   Articulatory Phonetics study of how sounds are produced. It examines how speech sounds are made by the vocal tract. It looks at the physical movements of the tongue, lips, jaw, and vocal cords to produce sounds. Examples :

   - Aspirated sounds (e.g., [p^h] in "pat"): air puff released with the sound

     Say "pat" and feel the air puff on your hand
   - Nasal sounds (e.g., [m] in "mat"): air flows through the nose

     Say "mat" and feel the vibration in your nose
   - Stop sounds (e.g., [t] in "top"): complete blockage of airflow

     Say "top" and feel your tongue blocking the airflow
   - Vowel sounds (e.g., [i] in "beat"): tongue position and lip shape affect sound

Say "beat" and "boot" and notice the difference in tongue position

2. Acoustic Phonetics

Acoustic phonetics analyzes the sound waves produced by speech. It examines the physical properties of sound waves, like frequency, amplitude, and duration. - Examples:

- Pitch: rising intonation in questions vs. falling in statements
  Say "You're going?" (rising pitch) vs. "You're going." (falling pitch)
- Loudness: stressed syllables are louder than unstressed ones
  Say "banana" and notice the stress on the second syllable (ba-NA-na)
- Vowel formants: [i] in "beat" has higher frequency than [u] in "boot"
  Say "beat" and "boot" and notice the difference in sound quality
- Voice onset time (VOT): timing of vocal cord vibration in sounds like [p] vs. [b]
  Say "pat" and "bat" and notice the difference in vocal cord vibration

3. Auditory Phonetics

Auditory phonetics explores how listeners process and perceive speech sounds. It looks at how our brains interpret acoustic cues to recognize sounds and words. Examples:

- Phoneme perception: distinguishing between similar sounds like [t] and [d]
  Listen to "top" and "dop" and notice the difference
- Word recognition: identifying words in noisy environments (e.g., cocktail party effect)

Listen to a conversation in a noisy cafe and notice how you focus on the speaker's voice

- Speaker normalization: adjusting to different accents or voices

  Listen to someone with a different accent and notice how you adjust your perception

- Speech segmentation: breaking down continuous speech into individual sounds or words

  Listen to a sentence and try to identify the individual words

FACTORS INFLUENCING PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONETIC VARIATIONS IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS

Phonological and phonetic variations in sociolinguistics are influenced by a range of factors that reflect the complex relationship between language and society. These factors can be broadly categorized into individual, social, and contextual factors. Individual factors include age, gender, education, occupation, and socioeconomic status, which shape an individual's language use and pronunciation. For instance, a person's socioeconomic status can influence their pronunciation, with those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds often using more standard pronunciation.

Social and contextual factors, such as geographical location, language contact, and social networks, also play a significant role in shaping phonological and phonetics variations. Geographical location, for example, can influence the development of regional accents and dialects, while language contact can lead to the borrowing of sounds and sound patterns from one language to another. These factors interact and intersect, resulting in complex phonological and phonetic variations that reflect the social context in which language is used. Understanding these factors is essential for sociolinguists

to analyze and interpret language use in different social contexts.

Phonological and phonetic variations are shaped by various social factors, reflecting the complex relationship between language and society. This section explores seven key factors influencing these variations: geographical location, socioeconomic status, education, occupation, age, gender, and language contact. These factors interact and intersect, resulting in complex phonological and phonetic variations that reflect the social context in which language is used.

1. Geographical Location

   Geographical Location: Geographical location plays a significant role in shaping phonological and phonetics variations. Regional accents and dialects are often associated with specific geographical areas, reflecting the historical, cultural, and social characteristics of the region.

   Example: The pronunciation of "tomato" differs significantly between American English (/təˈmeɪtoʊ/) and British English (/təˈmɑːtəʊ/).

2. Socioeconomic Status

   Socioeconomic status is another important factor influencing phonological and phonetics variations. People from different socioeconomic backgrounds often exhibit distinct speech patterns, reflecting their social identity and group affiliation.

   Example: In some communities, people from higher socioeconomic backgrounds might use more standard pronunciation, while those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds might use more non-standard forms (Trudgill, 2000).

3. Education

   Education is a significant factor in shaping phonological and phonetic variations. Educated individuals often use

more standard pronunciation and vocabulary, reflecting their exposure to formal language instruction.

Example: Educated speakers might pronounce "ask" as /æsk/, while less educated speakers might use /æks/.

4. Occupation

   Occupation can also influence phonological and phonetic variations, with certain professions requiring specific communication styles or accents.

   Example: Actors and broadcasters often adopt a more standard accent to communicate effectively with a wide audience.

5. Age

   Age is another factor influencing phonological and phonetic variations, with younger speakers often exhibiting different speech patterns than older speakers.

   Example: Younger speakers might use more informal language and pronunciation, such as "gonna" instead of "going to".

6. Gender

   Gender can also influence phonological and phonetics variations, with men and women often exhibiting different speech patterns.

   Example: Women might use more standard pronunciation and polite language, while men might use more informal language and vernacular forms (Lakoff, 1975).

7. Language Contact

   Language contact occurs when speakers of different languages interact, leading to phonological and phonetics variations.

   Example: Bilingual speakers might exhibit phonological variations due to the influence of their other language, such as pronouncing "th" as "t" in English due to the influence of a native language that lacks the "th" sound.

PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONETICS VARIATIONS IN MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES

Phonological and phonetic variations are a common phenomenon in multilingual societies around the world. In these societies, speakers often use multiple languages or dialects, which can lead to phonological and phonetic variations.

1. Africa

   In Africa, there are many examples of phonological and phonetic variations. For example, in Nigeria, the pronunciation of English is influenced by the country's indigenous languages, such as Hausa and Yoruba (Bamgbose, 2014). In South Africa, the pronunciation of English is influenced by the country's indigenous languages, such as Zulu and Xhosa (Schneider, 2011). Here are some examples of phonological and phonetics variations in Africa:

   a. Click sounds: Many African languages, like Xhosa and Zulu, feature click sounds (e.g., /ǀ/, /ǁ/, /!/) that are not found in European languages.
   b. Tone languages: Many African languages, like Yoruba and Hausa, are tone languages, where pitch affects word meaning.
   c. Vowel harmony: Some African languages, like Swahili, exhibit vowel harmony, where vowels within a word harmonize in terms of features like front/back or rounded/unrounded.
   d. Implosive consonants: Some African languages, like Hausa, feature implosive consonants (e.g., /ɓ/, /ɗ/), made by drawing air into the mouth.
   e. Regional accents: Different regions and languages in Africa have distinct phonological and phonetic variations, like the pronunciation of "Shona" (/ʃoʊˈnɑː/ vs. /ʃɔːˈnɑː/).

2. Asia

In Asia, there are many examples of phonological and phonetic variations. For example, in Singapore, the pronunciation of English is influenced by the country's indigenous languages, such as Chinese, Malay, and Tamil (Kirkpatrick, 2013). In India, the pronunciation of English is influenced by the country's indigenous languages, such as Hindi and other Indian languages (Schneider, 2011). Here are some examples of phonological and phonetic variations in Asia:

a. Tone languages: Many Asian languages, like Mandarin Chinese, Thai, and Vietnamese, are tone languages, where pitch affects word meaning.
b. Aspiration: Languages like Hindi and Korean have aspirated and unaspirated consonants (e.g., /p^h/ vs. /p/).
c. Palatalization: In languages like Japanese and Korean, consonants are palatalized before certain vowels (e.g., /k/ -> /k^j/).
d. Vowel harmony: Some Asian languages, like Turkish and Mongolian, exhibit vowel harmony, where vowels within a word harmonize in terms of features like front/back or rounded/unrounded.
e. Distinctive sounds: Asian languages often feature unique sounds, like the retroflex consonants in Hindi (/ʈ/, /ɖ/) or the uvular consonants in Kazakh (/q/, /ɢ/).

3. Europe

In Europe, there are many examples of phonological and phonetic variations. For example, in the UK, the pronunciation of English varies depending on the region, with different accents and dialects in different parts of the country (Foulkes & Docherty, 2014). In France, the pronunciation of French is influenced by the country's

regional languages, such as Breton and Occitan (Lakoff, 2017). Here are some examples of phonological and phonetic variations in Eropa:

a. Uvular trills: Languages like French and German feature uvular trills (/ʀ/) in words like "rouge" and "rot" (red).
b. Palatalization: Many European languages, like Russian and Polish, exhibit palatalization of consonants before certain vowels (e.g., /k/ -> /k^j/).
c. Vowel fronting: Some languages, like French and German, feature vowel fronting (e.g., /u/ -> /y/ in French "tu").
d. Consonant clusters: European languages often have complex consonant clusters, like "strengths" in English or "schwarz" (black) in German.
e. Distinctive sounds: European languages feature unique sounds, like the Icelandic voiceless velar fricative (/x/) in "þakka" (thank).

4. The Americas

In the Americas, there are many examples of phonological and phonetic variations. For example, in the USA, the pronunciation of English, particularly in urban areas, is influenced by the country's immigrant languages, such as Spanish and Chinese (Labov, 2010). In Brazil, the pronunciation of Portuguese is influenced by the country's indigenous languages, such as Tupi and Guarani (Schneider, 2011). Here are some examples of phonological and phonetic variations in America:

a. Pin-pen merger: In some Southern states, "pin" and "pen" are pronounced the same, often as /pɪn/.
b. Cot-caught merger: In some Western states, "cot" and "caught" are pronounced the same, often as /kɑt/.

c. Dropped "r": In some Northeastern accents, like Boston, the "r" sound is often dropped after vowels, so "car" sounds like /ka:/.
d. Flapping: Americans often use a flap sound (like a soft "d" or "t") between vowels, so "butter" sounds like /bʌdər/.
e. Regional accents: Different regions have distinct accents, like the Southern drawl, New York City accent, or California vowel shift.

5. Australia

In the Australians, there are many examples of phonological and phonetic variations. Three regions in Australia with examples of phonological and phonetic variations. These variations are a normal part of Australian English and contribute to the country's unique linguistic identity. They are :

- In Queensland, the vowel in "face" is often pronounced more like /æɪ/ (e.g., "face" sounds like "fæɪs").
- In New South Wales, especially in Sydney, the "l" sound is often vocalized or dropped at the end of words (e.g., "milk" sounds like "miok").
- In Western Australia, particularly in Perth, the vowels in "dress" and "trap" are often pronounced more like /e/ and /æ/, with a distinct Western Australian twang.

  For example

  a. Vowel shift: Australian English has a distinct vowel shift, where the vowels in words like "bit" and "bat" are pronounced more like /bet/ and /bæt/.
  b. Dropped "r": Like many dialects of English, Australian English often drops the "r" sound after vowels, so "car" sounds like /ka:/.

c. Flapping: Australians often use a flap sound (like a soft "d" or "t") between vowels, so "butter" sounds like /bʌdər/.
d. Distinctive vocabulary: Aussie English has unique words and pronunciations, like "g'day" (/gəˈdaɪ/), "fair dinkum" (/feə ˈdɪŋkəm/), and "barbie" (/ˈbɑːbi/).
e. Regional variations: Different regions in Australia have distinct accents and vocabulary, like the broad, nasal accent of Queenslanders or the more clipped tones of West Aussies.

IMPLICATIONS OF PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONETIC VARIATIONS

Phonological and Phonetics Variations have important implications for language teaching and learning. For example, language teachers need to be aware of the different pronunciations of English in different parts of the world, and to adapt their teaching to the needs of their students (Kirkpatrick, 2013). Language learners also need to be aware of the different pronunciations of English in different parts of the world, and to develop their own pronunciation skills (Schneider, 2011).

The first is that phonological and phonetic variations can have significant implications for communication, particularly in multilingual or multicultural settings. One major implication is intelligibility: speakers with different phonological and phonetic variations may struggle to understand each other, leading to communication breakdowns. For instance, a speaker from Australia may pronounce "mate" differently from a speaker from the UK, potentially confusing.

The next implication is identity and social perception: phonological and phonetics variations can convey information about a speaker's regional or social background, influencing how

others perceive them. This can lead to stereotyping or bias, where people make assumptions about someone's education, socioeconomic status, or personality based on their accent or pronunciation.

Finally, phonological and phonetic variations have practical implications for language teaching and learning. Learners of a language may struggle to understand native speakers or be misunderstood themselves due to differences in pronunciation. This highlights the importance of incorporating authentic pronunciation models and awareness of phonological variations in language instruction, helping learners develop effective communication skills

CONCLUSION

The analysis of phonological and phonetics variations in multilingual societies reveals the complex and dynamic nature of language use. These variations are not random, but rather reflect the social, cultural, and geographical contexts in which languages are spoken. Understanding phonological and phonetic variations is crucial for effective communication, as it can facilitate intelligibility and reduce misunderstandings. Moreover, recognizing the significance of these variations can promote linguistic diversity and cultural understanding, fostering more inclusive and equitable societies

In conclusion, phonological and phonetic variations are an integral part of multilingual societies, shaping the way people communicate and interact. By embracing these variations, we can gain a deeper understanding of the intricate relationships between language, culture, and identity. This, in turn, can inform language policies, education, and communication strategies that cater to the needs of diverse populations, ultimately promoting more effective and inclusive communication.

SUGGESTION

To better understand and address phonological and phonetic variations in multilingual societies, we suggest incorporating authentic language data in language teaching and learning materials. This can include exposing learners to diverse accents, pronunciation, and language varieties, helping them develop a more nuanced understanding of language use in real-world contexts. Additionally, language awareness programs can be implemented to promote understanding and appreciation of linguistic diversity, reducing stereotypes and biases associated with language variations.

Furthermore, we suggest conducting further research on phonological and phonetics variations in multilingual societies, exploring the social, cultural, and linguistic factors that shape language use. This can inform language policies, education, and communication strategies, ultimately contributing to more effective and inclusive communication. By embracing phonological and phonetics variations, we can harness the benefits of linguistic diversity, fostering more harmonious and equitable societies

REFERENCES

Bamgbose, A. (2014). Language and the Nigerian Dream. University of Ibadan Press.

Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2016). Language and Identity. Routledge

Chambers, J. K. (2013). Sociolinguistic Theory: Linguistic Variation and Its Social Significance. Wiley-Blackwell.

Coupland, N. (2016). Sociolinguistics: Theoretical Debates. Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (2013). The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language. Cambridge University Press.

Eckert, P. (2018). Meaning and Linguistic Variation. Cambridge University Press.

Foulkes, P., & Docherty, G. (2014). Urban Voices: Accent Studies in the British Isles. Routledge.

Gumperz, J. J. (2015). Language and Social Identity. Cambridge University Press.

Holmes, J. (2013). An Introduction to Sociolinguistics. Pearson Education.

Jenkins, J. (2015). Global Englishes: A Resource Book for Students. Routledge.

Kachru, B. B. (2017). The Alchemy of English: The Spread, Functions, and Models of Non-Native Englishes. Routledge.

Kirkpatrick, A. (2013). Englishes in Asia: History, Forms, Contexts. Routledge

Labov, W. (2010). Principles of Linguistic Change: Cognitive and Cultural Factors.

Lakoff, R. (2017). Language and Woman's Place: Text and Commentaries. Oxford University Press.

Meyerhoff, M. (2011). Introducing Sociolinguistics. Routledge

Milroy, L., & Milroy, J. (2012). Authority in Language: Investigating Language Standardization and Prescription. Routledge.

Schneider, E. W. (2011). English Around the World: An Introduction. Cambridge University Press.

Srivastava, R. N. (2012). Language and Social Change in India Wiley-Blackwell

Trudgill, P. (2011). Sociolinguistic Typology: Social Determinants of Linguistic Complexity. Oxford University Press.

Wardhaugh, R. (2015). An Introduction to Sociolinguistics. Wiley-Blackwell.

AUTHOR'S PROFILE

DR. Dra. Afdaleni, M. Pd., M. Pd.

She is an English lecturer at Mohammad Natsir University, Bukittinggi. She was born in Lubukbasung, Agam Regency, West Sumatera, April 09, 1964. She has been teaching English since 1988 until now. She graduated from S1, S2, and S3 for English Education at Padang State University, West Sumatra. She has been a national English Language Education Assessor for lecturer's "BKD" from 2021 until now. She has been done many scientific researches and community services related to her field of study and has published them in national and international journals.

HP/Whatsapp: 08126761892

CHAPTER 6
LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL VARIATION

Paramita Kusumawardhani
Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika
E-mail: paramita.pmi@bsi.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Language variation has long been recognized as a defining characteristic of human communication. While early sociolinguistic research focused heavily on phonological and phonetic differences as the most salient markers of social variation, subsequent scholarship has demonstrated that variation is equally, if not more, visible in lexical choices and grammatical structures (Coetzee et al., 2025; Ting et al., 2025). The words speakers select, the meanings they attach to them, and the grammatical patterns they employ are deeply shaped by social context, group affiliation, and communicative purpose. In multilingual societies, where speakers routinely navigate more than one linguistic system, lexical and grammatical variation emerges as a particularly rich site for understanding how language operates as a social practice.

Multilingual contexts intensify the dynamics of variation because speakers draw on diverse linguistic repertoires shaped by region, ethnicity, generation, education, and histories of language contact (Goodchild & Weidl, 2025; Wigdorowitz et al., 2022). Vocabulary choices may index local identity, global orientation, or social alignment, while grammatical patterns often reflect long-term contact between languages and dialects (Khachaturyan et al., 2025). In such settings, variation is not merely a matter of optional linguistic alternatives but a key

mechanism through which speakers negotiate belonging, authority, and meaning in everyday interaction.

Sociolinguistic research consistently shows that lexical variation carries strong social meanings. Words are not neutral labels; they are imbued with ideological, cultural, and affective associations that position speakers within social landscapes (Sandow, 2023). Regional vocabulary, slang, and borrowed terms often serve as markers of solidarity or distinction, signaling alignment with particular communities or social identities. Similarly, grammatical variation, such as differences in tense marking, agreement patterns, or syntactic constructions, reflects systematic, rule-governed alternatives rather than deviations from a single standard norm (Al-Suhaimat et al., 2025). These insights challenge deficit-oriented views of nonstandard language use and reaffirm the sociolinguistic principle that all varieties possess structural complexity and communicative legitimacy.

Language contact plays a central role in shaping both lexical and grammatical variation in multilingual societies. Borrowing, code influence, and structural convergence are well-documented outcomes of sustained interaction between languages (Bompolas & Melissaropoulou, 2025; Graff et al., 2025). Lexical borrowing often occurs rapidly, particularly in domains related to technology, education, popular culture, and governance, while grammatical change tends to develop more gradually through prolonged bilingual use (Mambetalieva S et al., 2025). These contact-induced processes demonstrate that variation is not static but evolves through everyday communicative practices embedded in social, political, and historical contexts.

Despite the growing body of research on language variation, much of the literature continues to privilege phonological variation or treats lexical and grammatical phenomena in

isolation, often subordinating them to broader discussions of code-switching or bilingualism (Gu & Zhang, 2025). Moreover, studies of multilingualism frequently emphasize language choice between codes, while paying less attention to how variation operates *within* languages at the lexical and grammatical levels. This tendency has contributed to a fragmented understanding of how multilingual speakers mobilize linguistic resources in integrated and socially meaningful ways.

A further gap lies in the limited attention given to the social meanings and identity functions of lexical and grammatical variation in contemporary multilingual settings. While variationist approaches have generated valuable quantitative insights, fewer studies explicitly connect lexical and grammatical variation to youth culture, popular discourse, and hybrid identities shaped by globalization and digital communication (Zharkynbekova et al., 2025). As a result, everyday linguistic innovation, particularly among younger speakers, remains underexplored in many sociolinguistic accounts.

This chapter addresses these gaps by offering an integrated sociolinguistic account of lexical and grammatical variation in multilingual societies. Its central novelty lies in positioning lexical and grammatical variation not merely as outcomes of contact or regional differentiation, but as active social resources through which speakers construct identity, negotiate social relationships, and respond to changing communicative environments. By bringing together discussions of regional vocabulary, borrowing and semantic shift, dialect grammar, contact-induced grammatical change, and youth language within a single analytical framework, the chapter contributes to a more holistic understanding of variation as both systematic and

creative, and as fundamental to language use in multilingual worlds.

VOCABULARY AND REGIONAL IDENTITY

Vocabulary is one of the most immediately recognizable markers of regional and social identity. Even when speakers share the same language, they may employ different lexical items to refer to the same objects or concepts, depending on their regional background. Well-known examples from English, such as *lift* versus *elevator* or *flat* versus *apartment*, illustrate how lexical choices can signal geographical origin and alignment with particular speech communities. These differences are not random but socially meaningful, allowing listeners to infer where speakers come from and which linguistic norms they consider familiar or legitimate (Alzuabidi et al., 2025).

In multilingual societies, regional lexical variation becomes more pronounced due to sustained contact between dominant languages and local or indigenous varieties. National languages frequently incorporate region-specific vocabulary to express cultural practices, ecological features, or social relations that lack direct equivalents in standardized forms. Such localized terms often retain strong associations with particular regions, functioning as linguistic markers of place-based identity rather than merely filling lexical gaps (Rijal et al., 2025). This process highlights how vocabulary encodes local knowledge and embeds language use within specific cultural landscapes.

Regionally marked vocabulary also operates as a symbolic resource for expressing belonging and solidarity. Using local lexical items can index shared experience, collective memory, and cultural intimacy within a community. Speakers demonstrate not only linguistic competence but also social alignment with a particular region or group. For instance,

migrants may continue to use regionally specific vocabulary in urban or diasporic contexts as a way of maintaining ties to their place of origin, thereby reaffirming identity through everyday language practices (S. Li, 2025).

At the same time, lexical choices are shaped by social factors such as age, class, and communicative context. Speakers routinely engage in style-shifting, selecting regionally marked or standardized vocabulary depending on audience and setting. In informal interactions, local lexical items may be preferred to emphasize authenticity and in-group membership, while in formal domains, such as education, professional communication, or mass media, speakers may avoid them in favor of forms associated with wider intelligibility and prestige (Gritsenko et al., 2024). This flexibility reflects speakers' sociolinguistic awareness and their ability to navigate multiple norms.

Processes of mobility, urbanization, and digital communication further complicate the relationship between vocabulary and regional identity. Increased contact between speakers from different regions facilitates the diffusion of regionally marked words beyond their original geographic boundaries. Media and online platforms, in particular, can transform local vocabulary into symbols of broader cultural trends or youth styles, weakening their strictly regional associations (Pirdaus & Vera, 2025). At the same time, some communities actively preserve regional vocabulary as a form of resistance to linguistic homogenization and standardization.

Despite these dynamics, regionally marked vocabulary is often evaluated through hierarchical language ideologies that privilege standardized forms. Sociolinguistic research challenges such assumptions by demonstrating that all lexical systems are systematic and meaningful within their social contexts (Curzan et al., 2023). Attitudes toward vocabulary frequently reflect social power relations rather than linguistic

adequacy, with varieties linked to dominant regions gaining prestige while those associated with marginalized communities are stigmatized. Recognizing vocabulary as a socially embedded practice thus provides a more nuanced understanding of how regional identity is constructed, negotiated, and transformed in multilingual societies.

BORROWING, LOANWORDS, AND SEMANTIC SHIFT

Borrowing is one of the most prominent mechanisms through which lexical variation emerges in multilingual societies. Sustained interaction among speakers of different languages facilitates the transfer of lexical items, commonly known as loanwords, from one language to another. These borrowed forms reflect patterns of social contact, cultural exchange, and power relations rather than linguistic inadequacy. Sociolinguistic research emphasizes that borrowing demonstrates the adaptive capacity of languages to accommodate new communicative needs and social realities (P. Li, 2025).

Loanwords tend to cluster in particular semantic domains, especially those associated with innovation, globalization, and culturally specific practices. Fields such as technology, science, education, governance, and popular culture are especially productive sources of borrowing. For instance, English-derived terms like *internet*, *software*, and *online* have been widely adopted across languages to label technological concepts, while national or dominant languages often borrow from local or indigenous languages to name culturally embedded practices, foods, or kinship systems. These patterns indicate that borrowing flows in multiple directions, shaped by functional necessity and sociocultural relevance rather than simple dominance.

As loanwords enter a recipient language, they commonly undergo processes of phonological and morphological adaptation. Borrowed forms are adjusted to fit local sound systems and grammatical patterns, allowing them to take native affixes or inflections. Over time, many loanwords become fully naturalized and no longer perceived as foreign by speakers. This gradual integration highlights lexical change as an accumulative process embedded in everyday language use and long-term social interaction (Wu et al., 2025).

Lexical variation is further shaped by semantic shift, whereby words, whether borrowed or native, develop new or modified meanings in specific social contexts. In multilingual environments, such shifts often result from cultural reinterpretation or functional expansion, as borrowed terms acquire meanings that diverge from those in the source language. These changes are not random; they reflect local communicative practices, cultural values, and patterns of social interaction, particularly in urban and youth varieties (Mambetalieva S et al., 2025).

Despite extensive documentation of borrowing and semantic change, much existing research treats these processes primarily as linguistic outcomes rather than socially situated practices. This chapter addresses that gap by foregrounding borrowing and semantic shift as forms of social negotiation through which speakers index identity, modernity, and group affiliation. By integrating structural analysis with sociolinguistic interpretation, it highlights the novelty of viewing lexical variation not merely as lexical expansion but as an active site where globalization, localization, and identity construction intersect.

DIALECT GRAMMAR AND STRUCTURAL DIFFERENCES

Grammatical variation constitutes a central dimension of sociolinguistic diversity, extending beyond vocabulary to include differences in sentence structure, word order, agreement patterns, and morphological marking across dialects. Contrary to prescriptive views that treat grammar as a fixed and hierarchical system, sociolinguistic research has shown that dialect grammar is systematic, rule-governed, and internally coherent, even when it diverges from standardized norms (Mansfield et al., 2023). These structural differences reflect the social histories and communicative practices of speech communities rather than deficiencies in linguistic competence.

Dialectal grammatical variation is evident across multiple domains, including verb tense and aspect marking, negation patterns, pronoun systems, and agreement rules. A well-known example is multiple negation in several English dialects, where constructions such as *I didn't see nothing* function as grammatically acceptable and semantically emphatic forms. Although stigmatized in standardized English, such patterns follow consistent grammatical rules within their respective varieties, demonstrating that so-called "non-standard" grammar represents alternative norms rather than random deviation (Blanchette et al., 2018).

Pronoun use further illustrates how dialect grammar encodes social meaning. Some dialects maintain distinctions absent from standardized forms, such as innovative second-person plural pronouns or differentiated referential systems. These grammatical features serve pragmatic purposes, such as clarifying reference and signaling in-group membership. Similarly, variation in subject–verb agreement reflects local conventions shaped by usage and interaction, reinforcing the

view that grammatical choices are socially embedded rather than purely formal (Felser & Jessen, 2021).

In multilingual societies, dialect grammar is frequently shaped by sustained language contact. Speakers who routinely navigate more than one linguistic system may transfer syntactic or morphological patterns across languages, resulting in distinctive grammatical structures. This contact-induced grammatical variation is not arbitrary but constrained by typological compatibility, frequency of use, and social factors such as prestige and identity (Meyer, 2023). Over time, such features may stabilize and become recognized components of local dialects, particularly in informal speech domains.

Despite extensive documentation of these patterns, much research on grammatical variation has tended to prioritize structural description over social interpretation. This chapter responds to that gap by foregrounding dialect grammar as a social resource through which speakers index identity, belonging, and local affiliation. By situating grammatical variation within everyday multilingual practices, it highlights the need to move beyond deficit-based models and to recognize dialect grammar as a legitimate and meaningful component of linguistic diversity.

CONTACT-INDUCED GRAMMATICAL CHANGE

Language contact exerts a profound influence not only on vocabulary but also on grammatical structures. In multilingual societies, sustained interaction among speakers of different languages often leads to contact-induced grammatical change, in which morphological, syntactic, and discourse-level features are reshaped through bilingual or multilingual practices. These changes emerge gradually through repeated interaction and accommodation, reflecting speakers' pragmatic needs rather than abrupt disruption of grammatical systems.

One frequent outcome of contact-induced change is the restructuring of grammatical paradigms. When speakers regularly move between languages with different morphological complexities, inflectional systems may become simplified or regularized. For example, extensive case marking or verb inflection can be reduced in contact with more analytic languages. Such developments do not signal linguistic erosion but illustrate functional adaptation that prioritizes communicative efficiency in multilingual settings (Šabec, 1999).

Contact also affects word order and clause structure. In contexts where languages with different syntactic patterns coexist, speakers may transfer familiar constructions from one language to another, particularly in informal interaction. Over time, these transferred patterns can become conventionalized, producing flexible or mixed word-order systems that differ from inherited norms. These emergent structures demonstrate that grammar adapts to speakers' multilingual repertoires rather than remaining fixed and uniform.

Another significant manifestation of contact-induced grammatical change is the emergence of new grammatical markers. Through grammaticalization, borrowed lexical items or discourse particles may develop into markers of tense, aspect, modality, or stance. In multilingual environments, speakers often repurpose existing forms to align with patterns found in another language. Initially optional, these innovations may stabilize and become core features of local varieties.

Such processes are especially visible in postcolonial and migrant communities, where local varieties of global languages display grammatical features shaped by indigenous or substrate languages. Alternative tense-aspect systems, distinctive negation patterns, or culturally specific discourse markers frequently emerge in these contexts. Rather than representing incomplete mastery of standardized norms, these grammatical features

constitute systematic outcomes of historical contact, social negotiation, and identity construction (Mehuli & Angin, 2022).

Despite extensive descriptive work, much research still frames contact-induced grammatical change primarily in structural terms, with limited attention to its social embeddedness. This chapter addresses that gap by foregrounding grammar as a socially situated resource shaped by power relations, language prestige, and everyday language use. By integrating structural and sociolinguistic perspectives, it highlights the novelty of understanding grammatical change not as deviation from a standard, but as an index of multilingual experience and social meaning.

SLANG, YOUTH LANGUAGE, AND POPULAR EXPRESSIONS

Slang and youth language represent some of the most dynamic forms of lexical and grammatical variation in multilingual societies. Young speakers frequently lead linguistic innovation by creating new expressions, resemanticizing existing words, and reshaping grammatical patterns to articulate identity, belonging, and social positioning. These practices underscore that language change is not solely driven by structural evolution but emerges from social interaction and everyday communicative needs (Pesina et al., 2024).

In multilingual contexts, youth language is typically formed through the interplay of multiple linguistic resources. Young people draw simultaneously on national languages, local or regional languages, and global languages, particularly English, to construct hybrid and flexible forms of expression. Slang often involves code-mixing, phonological adaptation, and semantic shifts that are unlikely to appear in formal registers, reflecting translingual identities shaped by mobility and cultural contact (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001; Zharkynbekova et al., 2025)

Popular culture and digital media significantly accelerate the circulation of youth slang. Social media platforms, messaging applications, and video-sharing sites enable new expressions to spread rapidly beyond their original communities. Memes, song lyrics, hashtags, and viral content function as powerful vectors of linguistic diffusion, creating what Androutsopoulos (2014) terms mediatized sociolinguistic spaces, where linguistic innovation is shaped by both online visibility and peer interaction.

Many slang expressions that originate within youth subcultures gradually move into mainstream usage. Terms initially used as in-group markers to signal solidarity or resistance to authority may later be adopted by older speakers, mass media, or even institutional discourse. This process highlights youth language as a testing ground for linguistic innovation, where novel forms are evaluated, adapted, and sometimes normalized within the wider language system.

Despite its creativity, youth language is often stigmatized as informal or linguistically deficient, particularly within educational settings that prioritize standardized norms. Sociolinguistic research, however, consistently shows that slang and youth varieties are systematic, rule-governed, and socially meaningful. They enable young speakers to negotiate social boundaries, express stance, and construct identities in ways that standardized forms may constrain.

From a grammatical perspective, youth language also introduces innovative structures, including nonstandard agreement patterns, pragmatic particles, and compressed syntactic forms suited to rapid and digitally mediated interaction. These features reflect context-sensitive adaptation rather than random deviation. While previous studies often treat youth language as peripheral, this chapter emphasizes its analytical value as a key site for observing ongoing grammatical

change, identity work, and the social dynamics of language variation in contemporary multilingual societies.

CONCLUSION

Lexical and grammatical variation demonstrates that language in multilingual societies is inherently dynamic, adaptive, and socially embedded. Variations in vocabulary, borrowing patterns, grammatical structures, and youth language practices reveal how speakers draw on diverse linguistic resources to express regional identity, social affiliation, and cultural experience. Far from being random or deficient, these variations are systematic and meaningful, shaped by historical contact, social interaction, and communicative needs. The discussion in this chapter underscores that lexical and grammatical forms function not only as tools for conveying information but also as markers of belonging, identity, and social positioning within complex linguistic ecologies.

Taken together, the analyses presented in this chapter highlight the importance of viewing variation as a central component of language use rather than a deviation from standardized norms. In multilingual contexts, contact-induced change, dialect grammar, and youth-driven innovation illustrate how linguistic systems evolve through everyday practice and social negotiation. Recognizing the legitimacy of these forms has important implications for sociolinguistic theory, language education, and language policy, as it encourages more inclusive perspectives on linguistic diversity and supports the understanding of language as a living, socially grounded phenomenon.

REFERENCES

Al-Suhaimat, B. A., Algharibeh, A. A., & Al-Daher, Z. (2025). Syntactic Optimality vs. Communicative Optimality: The

Syntax of Present-Tense Constructions in Classical Arabic. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, *7*(9), 185-202–185–202. https://doi.org/10.30564/FLS.V7I9.11022

Alzuabidi, A. M., Aliakbar, S. F., Jamil, S. A., & Ibrahim, E. R. (2025). Lexical Variations in Northern and Southern British English. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, *7*(5), 387-400–387–400. https://doi.org/10.30564/FLS.V7I5.8830

Androutsopoulos, J. (2014). Beyond "media influence." *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *18*(2), 242–249. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/josl.12072

Blackledge, A., & Pavlenko, A. (2001). Negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *5*(3), 243–257. https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069010050030101;PAGE:STRING:ARTICLE/CHAPTER

Blanchette, F., Nadeu, M., Yeaton, J., & Deprez, V. (2018). English negative concord and double negation: The division of labor between syntax and pragmatics. *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America*, *3*(1), 53:1-15. https://doi.org/10.3765/PLSA.V3I1.4349

Bompolas, S., & Melissaropoulou, D. (2025). Understanding Dialectal Variation in Contact Scenarios Through Dialectometry: Insights from Inner Asia Minor Greek. *Languages*, *10*(1), 13. https://doi.org/10.3390/LANGUAGES10010013/S1

Coetzee, A. W., Henriksen, N., & García-Amaya, L. (2025). Cross-Language Interactions of Phonetic and Phonological Processes: Intervocalic Plosive Lenition in Afrikaans-Spanish Bilinguals. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *47*(1), 257–281. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263124000731

Curzan, A., M.queen, R., Vaneyk, K., & Weissler, R. E. (2023). Language Standardization & Linguistic

Subordination. *Daedalus*, *152*(3), 18–35. https://doi.org/10.1162/DAED_A_02015

Felser, C., & Jessen, A. (2021). Correlative Coordination and Variable Subject–Verb Agreement in German. *Languages 2021, Vol. 6, Page 67*, *6*(2), 67. https://doi.org/10.3390/LANGUAGES6020067

Goodchild, S., & Weidl, M. (2025). Exploring the Complexity of Multilingual Spaces: Embracing Diverse Perspectives of Linguistic Non-Understanding. *Multilingua*, *44*(1), 123–152. https://doi.org/10.1515/MULTI-2024-0118/XML

Graff, A., Blasi, D. E., Ringen, E. J., Bajić, V., Bavelier, D., Shimizu, K. K., Pakendorf, B., Barbieri, C., & Bickel, B. (2025). Patterns of Genetic Admixture Reveal Similar Rates of Borrowing Across Diverse Scenarios of Language Contact. *Science Advances* , *11*(35), 7521. https://doi.org/10.1126/SCIADV.ADV7521;REQUESTEDJOURNAL:JOURNAL:SCIADV;WGROUP:STRING:PUBLICATION

Gritsenko, E. S., Laletina, A. O., & Гриценко, E. C. (2024). English as a 'local' language in Russia: the practice of meaning-making in in-group communication. *Linguistics & Polyglot Studies*, *10*(2), 154–165. https://doi.org/10.24833/2410-2423-2024-2-39-154-165

Gu, L., & Zhang, W. (2025). The Role of Phonology in Processing English Suffixed Words by Chinese–English Bilinguals. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications 2025 12:1*, *12*(1), 241-. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-025-04398-7

Khachaturyan, M., Moroz, G., & Mamy, P. (2025). Awareness of Grammatical Variability in Language Contact: The Case of Mano and Kpelle in Guinea. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *29*(4), 268–284. https://doi.org/10.1111/JOSL.12705

Li, P. (2025). Research on Russian Loanwords from the

Perspective of Sociolinguistics. *Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media*, *84*(1), 43–48. https://doi.org/10.54254/2753-7048/2025.20511

Li, S. (2025). Factors Influencing New Migrants' Multilingual Identities in Guangzhou. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics (United Kingdom)*. https://doi.org/10.1111/IJAL.12771;CSUBTYPE:STRING:AHEAD

Mambetalieva S, Jiaqi, Z., & Osmonova Ch. (2025). Lexical Borrowings and Semantic Shift in Digital Neologisms of Chinese-English Origin. *Bulletin of Science and Practice*, *11*(9). https://doi.org/10.33619/2414-2948/118

Mansfield, J., Leslie-O'Neill, H., & Li, H. (2023). Dialect differences and linguistic divergence: A crosslinguistic survey of grammatical variation. *Language Dynamics and Change*, *13*(2), 232–276. https://doi.org/10.1163/22105832-BJA10026

Mehuli, D., & Angin, P. (2022). An Extended Study on Tense and Aspect Markers in Pagu. *Journal of Language and Literature*, *22*(2), 389–403. https://doi.org/10.24071/JOLL.V22I2.4765

Meyer, R. (2023). Towards a Typology of Contact-Induced Change: Questions, Problems and the Path Ahead. *Transactions of the Philological Society*, *121*(3), 336–356. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-968X.12283;WGROUP:STRING:PUBLICATION

Pesina, S. A., Vinogradova, S. A., Tomin, V. V., Trofimova, N. A., Rubtsova, S. Y., Morozova, M. N., & Velikanova, S. S. (2024). Youth Slang as a Social Language Code: Functions and Formation. *Cadernos de Educação Tecnologia e Sociedade*, *17*(2), 803–811. https://doi.org/10.14571/BRAJETS.V17.N2.803-811

Pirdaus, D. I., & Vera. (2025). Media and Internet Linguistics:

Language Transformation in Digital Communication. *International Journal of Linguistics, Communication, and Broadcasting*, *3*(2), 50–56. https://doi.org/10.46336/IJLCB.V3I2.226

Rijal, S., Hasyim, M., Lukman, L., & Iswary, E. (2025). Signifying the End of Swidden? An Analysis of Vocabulary of the Fallow Stage Among a Kalimantan Indigenous Group, Indonesia. *Forest and Society*, *9*(2), 604–622. https://doi.org/10.24259/FS.V9I2.43632

Šabec, N. (1999). Language Change in a Contact Situation: The Case of Slovene in North America. *Slovene Linguistic Studies*. https://doi.org/10.17161/SLS.1808.804

Sandow, R. J. (2023). An Emmet's Tale: The Duality of Social and Lexical Change. *Language & Communication*, *93*, 15–29. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.LANGCOM.2023.08.002

Ting, C., Clayards, M., Sonderegger, M., & McAuliffe, M. (2025). The Crosslinguistic Distribution of Vowel and Consonant Intrinsic F0 Effects. *Language*, *101*(1), 1–36. https://doi.org/10.1353/LAN.2025.A954227

Wigdorowitz, M., Pérez, A. I., & Tsimpli, I. M. (2022). Sociolinguistic Context Matters: Exploring Differences in Contextual Linguistic Diversity in South Africa and England. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, *16*(4), 345–364. https://doi.org/10.1080/19313152.2022.2069416;ISSUE:ISSUE:DOI

Wu, J., Han, M., & Schiller, N. O. (2025). Neuro-cognitive correlates of lexical borrowing during sentence comprehension of bi-dialectal speakers. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728925000264

Zharkynbekova, S., Shakhputova, Z., Anichshenko, O., & Agabekova, Z. (2025). The Speech Behaviour of

Kazakhstani Youth in the Context of Interethnic Communication. *Journalism and Media 2025, Vol. 6, Page 45*, *6*(1), 45. https://doi.org/10.3390/JOURNALMEDIA6010045

AUTHOR'S PROFILE

Paramita Kusumawardhani
is now continuing her studies at Indonesia University of Education (UPI), majoring in Linguistics. She is continuing her studies by using Indonesia Education Scholarship (BPI). She has done some research related to English such as ELT and Linguistics. Her research can be found on https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=id&user=N0jhFzUAAAAJ.

CHAPTER 7
BILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM COMPETENCE

Yetty
Universitas Khairun, Ternate
E-mail: Yettyetty@unkhair.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary sociolinguistic landscape, bilingualism and multilingualism are no longer peripheral phenomena but have crystallized into dominant social realities (Grosjean, 2010). This shift is driven by the complex interplay of transnational migration flows, market globalization, and the digital revolution that connects speakers across geographical boundaries (Blommaert, (2010); Vertovec (2007). In everyday life, language users are increasingly exposed to intense and layered language contact (Wei. (2018), reinforcing the notion that bilingualism and multilingualism have become widespread empirical realities rather than exclusive or exceptional conditions. Consequently, these phenomena demand systematic examination within academic discourse.

Bilingualism and multilingualism are understood as products of sustained language contact within a speech community from a sociolinguistic perspective. Language, in this sense, transcends its instrumental function as a medium of communication and evolves into a marker of identity, a symbol of solidarity (Wahyuni, (2021)), and an arena of power relations (Suryanto, & Saefullah, (2022)). Multilingual practices are therefore deeply intertwined with the social, cultural, and political ecologies in which they are embedded.

Alongside the expansion of multilingual societies, the concept of language competence has undergone a paradigmatic shift. Language competence is no longer viewed merely as mastery of grammatical structures but as a multifaceted ability encompassing social, pragmatic, and cultural dimensions (Siregar & Siregar, 2023; Prasetyo, 2021). This viewpoint is consistent with the fact that intercultural sensitivity and a thorough awareness of sociocultural norms are necessary for successful communication in a multilingual society (Murni, 2023). For bilingual and multilingual speakers, competence is inherently dynamic and contextual, as languages are deployed for different purposes across diverse communicative situations.
This chapter discusses bilingual and multilingual competence from a sociolinguistic perspective, emphasizing its relationship with language variation, social identity, and linguistic practices. It also addresses the implications of multilingual competence in educational contexts, particularly in English Language Education, and its relevance within multilingual societies such as Indonesia.

FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF BILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM

Terminologically, the distinction between bilingualism and multilingualism is often defined quantitatively: bilingualism refers to an individual’s competence in two languages, whereas multilingualism denotes proficiency in more than two languages. However, contemporary scholars argue that these definitions should also account for the functional use of languages in daily life rather than just balanced proficiency (Kayadibi, 2022). Furthermore, multilingualism is increasingly viewed as an integrated linguistic repertoire where multiple languages interact and coexist within an individual's mind (Cenoz, 2013; Marian & Hayakawa, 2020).

The classification of bilingualism and multilingualism can be understood through various dimensions, including temporal, proficiency, and socio-cognitive aspects. Chronologically, speakers are categorized into early bilingualism, involving simultaneous or sequential language acquisition during childhood, and late bilingualism, which occurs after puberty. In terms of proficiency, the spectrum ranges from balanced bilingualism, where speakers possess equal competence across all languages, to dominant and receptive bilingualism, which highlights specific functional language uses (Baker & Wright, 2021). Cognitively, Weinreich's theory distinguishes between compound, coordinate, and subordinate types based on how linguistic concepts are stored within the speaker's mental structure. From a sociolinguistic perspective, these phenomena are also differentiated into additive bilingualism, which enriches the linguistic repertoire without marginalizing the mother tongue, and subtractive bilingualism, which may lead to language shift (Hamers & Blanc, 2000). In the Indonesian context, this reality commonly manifests as folk multilingualism, an organic and functional practice where individuals naturally acquire local, national, and foreign languages as part of their social navigation strategies (Arung, 2022).

In linguistic taxonomy, this operational description is frequently used as a starting point. However, it is generally accepted that a purely numerical approach is reductive and unable to portray the complexity of linguistic landscapes in the actual world.

Empirical evidence demonstrates that linguistic competence is rarely symmetrical across all languages known by an individual. Typically, one language tends to dominate over others depending on exposure intensity and frequency of use. Consequently, traditional definitions that require equal mastery,

often referred to as balanced bilingualism, are considered overly idealistic and frequently fail to reflect speakers' actual linguistic abilities.

In response to these limitations, contemporary scholars increasingly adopt more inclusive and flexible definitions that prioritize functional language use rather than rigid grammatical mastery. Within this framework, an individual may be classified as bilingual as long as they can meaningfully use two languages to meet communicative needs in specific social contexts, regardless of disparities in fluency levels. This functional approach is far more compatible with the lived realities of linguistically diverse societies.

At a broader level, multilingualism extends beyond individual cognitive capacity to encompass the social configuration of communities. A multilingual society is characterized by the coexistence of multiple languages distributed across specific functional domains, often in diglossic or polyglossic arrangements. Such configurations generate stratified language use, ranging from vernacular languages in domestic and informal settings, national languages in administrative and educational domains, to foreign languages serving as gateways for global interaction.

Ultimately, within the sociolinguistic framework, bilingualism and multilingualism are understood as dynamic social phenomena rather than static entities. Their existence is shaped by intersecting macro-level factors such as historical trajectories, migration patterns, language policies, and educational systems. A comprehensive analysis, therefore, necessitates a holistic approach that situates language within the broader social and cultural ecology in which it is cultivated and used.

LANGUAGE COMPETENCE FROM A LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

Historically, the discourse on language competence is rooted in the tradition of generative linguistics. The concept was initially postulated as a theoretical construct representing a speaker's mental knowledge of their language system. Within this paradigm, competence is conceived as an innate cognitive property enabling humans to comprehend and produce an infinite number of utterances from a finite set of rules.

Competence is more precisely characterized as an idealized and comprehensive internal representation of language information that includes mastery of phonological rules, lexical resources, and grammar (syntax). This formal viewpoint is still a crucial starting point for comprehending how multilingual people structure their internal linguistic systems in the Indonesian setting before they are expressed in social performance (Suryahati, 2020; Ramadhianti & Somad, 2023). Based on a limited number of principles, speakers can produce infinitely innovative phrases because of the cognitive framework formed by this internal knowledge (Arifin, 2017). Equipped with this abstract knowledge, speakers are presumed to be able to produce meaningful and grammatically accurate statements regardless of whether they have seen such sentences before.

To clarify its theoretical boundaries, generative linguistics draws a strict distinction between competence and performance. Competence refers to underlying linguistic knowledge, while performance denotes the actual use of language in real communicative situations. Performance is considered susceptible to various internal and external constraints, such as memory limitations, physical fatigue, emotional states, or environmental noise, which may result in imperfect utterances despite intact competence.

Although this competence–performance dichotomy has significantly contributed to theoretical linguistics, particularly in mapping universal language structures, it has also attracted substantial criticism. Critics argue that this approach reduces language to purely mental operations occurring in a social vacuum, thereby neglecting sociological variables that crucially shape language use in authentic human interaction.

These limitations become particularly pronounced in the context of bilingualism and multilingualism. The generative notion of the "ideal speaker" implicitly presupposes a monolingual individual within a homogeneous community. As a result, this framework struggles to account for multilingual phenomena such as code-switching and code-mixing, which are often mischaracterized as deficiencies rather than recognized as sophisticated communicative strategies.

Empirical observations reveal that multilingual speakers exhibit fluid and context-sensitive language use that cannot be adequately analyzed through grammatical structures alone. This reality underscores the need for a paradigmatic shift toward more contextual approaches that integrate social dimensions as an intrinsic component of language competence.

COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE AND THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

As a counterpoint to the reductionist view of linguistic competence, sociolinguists—most notably Dell Hymes (1972)—introduced the concept of communicative competence. This framework emerged from the recognition that language mastery does not operate in isolation (Mustafa & Hamzah, 2022). Accordingly, linguistic ability must encompass not only what is grammatically correct but also what is socially appropriate within specific contexts (Canale & Swain, 1980; Suryahadi, 2021).

At its core, communicative competence emphasizes the integration of linguistic knowledge with sociocultural norms. A speaker is considered competent not merely when they can construct well-formed sentences, but when they know when to speak, when to remain silent, what to say, to whom, and in what manner. Language is thus conceptualized as socially regulated behavior rather than a purely cognitive algorithm.

To operationalize this expansive concept, communicative competence is typically delineated into four interrelated components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. This taxonomy offers a more comprehensive analytical framework than earlier generative models.

In bilingual and multilingual societies, these components operate simultaneously within every speech event. Multilingual speakers often rely on strategic competence to engage in code-switching when encountering lexical gaps, or on sociolinguistic competence to select appropriate language varieties when interacting with interlocutors from diverse cultural backgrounds. From a broader sociolinguistic standpoint, language competence is understood as an evolving social skill rather than a static end product. It develops through sustained social interaction, with multilingual speakers continually calibrating their language choices—adjusting register, style, and tone—in response to shifting interlocutors, contexts, and communicative goals. This fluidity constitutes a defining characteristic of competence in pluralistic societies.

BILINGUAL COMPETENCE

Empirically, bilingual competence rarely manifests as a perfect equilibrium between two linguistic systems. Instead, it is more commonly characterized by asymmetrical proficiency, where one language dominates over the other. Such dominance

is shaped by the speaker's linguistic ecology, including frequency of use, intensity of exposure, and functional distribution across domains of daily life.

Sociolinguistic literature distinguishes between balanced bilingualism and dominant bilingualism. Balanced bilingualism refers to the idealized condition in which speakers possess equivalent competence in both languages. However, this condition is relatively rare compared to dominant bilingualism, where one language—often the first or socially dominant language—exhibits significantly higher proficiency.

Beyond technical proficiency, bilingualism is also categorized based on the impact of second language acquisition on the first language, commonly described as additive or subtractive bilingualism. Additive bilingualism occurs when learning an additional language enriches the speaker's linguistic repertoire without undermining the first language. In contrast, subtractive bilingualism arises when the socially or economically dominant second language gradually erodes the first language.

Understanding these dynamics is essential for dismantling deficit-oriented views of bilingual speakers. Linguistic imbalance should not be interpreted as a cognitive deficiency, but rather as a functional adaptation to social demands. Apparent asymmetries in proficiency reflect the differentiated roles languages play in meeting specific communicative needs.

MULTILINGUAL COMPETENCE AND LINGUISTIC REPERTOIRE

Contemporary sociolinguistic discourse has significantly reconceptualized multilingual competence. It is no longer viewed as the accumulation of separate monolingual competences, but as the ability to manage an integrated and dynamic linguistic repertoire. Language boundaries become

fluid, with languages functioning as interconnected communicative resources within a unified cognitive system. Multilingual speakers typically mobilize their entire linguistic repertoire to achieve communicative goals, demonstrating high cognitive flexibility and pragmatic creativity. Multilingual competence is therefore better understood as a strategic capacity—the ability to navigate and deploy linguistic resources—rather than mere grammatical mastery of discrete languages.

This holistic view aligns closely with the concept of plurilingual competence, which emphasizes hybridity and interconnectivity among linguistic resources. Competence is seen as adaptive and singular, comprising a unified repertoire that responds dynamically to changing social contexts.

MULTILINGUAL COMPETENCE AND SOCIAL IDENTITY

Bilingualism and multilingualism are deeply intertwined with the construction of social identity (Pawi, 2020). Language choices function as symbolic acts through which speakers declare affiliation, position themselves socially, and negotiate belonging within complex social landscapes (Wahyuni, 2021).

Each linguistic choice serves as an index of sociocultural background, projecting values, attitudes, and group alignments. Identity in multilingual societies is fluid and continuously negotiated, with speakers performing different identities across contexts through strategic language use. Consequently, multilingual competence cannot be disentangled from ideology and power. It constitutes symbolic capital that speakers use to claim, maintain, or challenge social positions, rendering every speech event a microcosm of social negotiation.

BILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM IN EDUCATION

In contemporary education, linguistic diversity is increasingly viewed as an intellectual asset rather than an impediment. Students bring rich linguistic and cultural resources into the classroom, necessitating a shift from deficit-based to resource-oriented pedagogies.

Learning environments that are psychologically safe and increase student engagement are produced by pedagogical techniques that acknowledge multilingual competency. Translanguaging is a popular tactic that purposefully incorporates students' entire linguistic repertoires to promote deeper meaning-making (Sukyadi & Mardiana, 2024). This method, which departs from monolingual beliefs, enables students to use their varied linguistic resources to close the gap between the language of instruction and their native tongues (Rasman, 2018). In English Language Teaching, understanding bilingual and multilingual competence is essential for designing inclusive curricula. The goal shifts from producing native-like speakers to developing culturally responsive and globally competent language users.

INDONESIA AS A MULTILINGUAL SOCIETY

Indonesia exemplifies a multilingual society, where hundreds of local languages coexist alongside Indonesian as the national language and foreign languages as global gateways (Zein, 2018; Sukyadi, 2015). This trilingual structure renders multilingual competence a ubiquitous social reality rather than an elite exception, as it is practiced across various social strata in daily interactions (Musyahadah, 2022). Consequently, the acquisition of these languages is not merely an academic pursuit but a functional necessity for navigating the complex linguistic landscape of the country (Arung, 2022).

Language acquisition in Indonesia occurs through formal education as well as organic social interaction, reinforced by media and digital technologies. Language use is functionally distributed across domains, reflecting diglossic and polyglossic patterns. Educational language policies must therefore align with sociolinguistic realities, adopting flexible and culturally responsive approaches that leverage students' multilingual resources as assets.

CONCLUSION

Bilingualism and multilingualism competence are central to understanding linguistic practices in modern societies. Language competence is dynamic, contextual, and socially constructed through interaction. A sociolinguistic perspective reveals that bilingual and multilingual competence encompasses linguistic, social, and cultural dimensions. This understanding enriches sociolinguistic theory and offers practical implications for language education in multilingual contexts.

REFERENCES

Arifin, Z. (2017). Pengetahuan linguistik dan penguasaan tata bahasa dalam perspektif kognitif. *Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, *18*(1), 1-10.

Arung, F. (2022). Language contact and multilingualism in Indonesia: A sociolinguistic perspective. *Kajian Linguistik dan Sastra*, *7*(1), 45-58.

Baker, C., & Wright, W. E. (2021). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (7th ed.). Multilingual Matters.

Blommaert, J. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge University Press.

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, *1*(1), 1–47.

Cenoz, J. (2013). Defining multilingualism. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *33*, 3–18. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026719051300007X

Gardner-Chloros, P. (2009). *Code-switching*. Cambridge University Press

Grosjean, F. (2010). *Bilingual: Life and reality*. Harvard University Press.

Hamers, J. F., & Blanc, M. H. (2000). *Bilinguality and bilingualism* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics: Selected readings* (pp. 269–293). Penguin.

Kayadibi, N. (2022). Bibliometric analysis of educational researches on bilingualism. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, *10*(3), 80–90. https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.10n.3p.80

Marian, V., & Hayakawa, S. (2020). Measuring bilingualism: The quest for a "Bilingualism Quotient". *Applied Psycholinguistics*, *42*(2), 527–548. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0142716420000533

Murni, S. M. (2023). Developing intercultural communicative competence in the Indonesian context. *Journal of English Education and Linguistics Studies (JEELS)*, *10*(1), 45-68.

Mustafa, F., & Hamzah, A. (2022). Integrating sociolinguistic competence into language pedagogy: A response to the reductionist view. *TEFLIN Journal*, *33*(1), 55-78.

Musyahadah, L. (2022). Sociolinguistic repertoire of Indonesian multilinguals: A study on language use in daily interaction. *Jurnal Linguistik Terapan*, *12*(1), 15-28.

Muysken, P. (2000). *Bilingual speech: A typology of code-mixing*. Cambridge University Press.

Pawi, A. A. A. (2020). Language and identity: The case of Indonesian multilinguals. *Journal of Language and Literature*, *20*(1), 102-115.

Ramadhianti, A., & Somad, M. A. (2023). Analisis penguasaan komponen linguistik: Fonologi, morfologi, dan sintaksis pada penutur bilingual. *Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra dan Pengajaran (KIBASP)*, *6*(2), 210-224.

Rasman. (2018). To translanguage or not to translanguage? The multilingual practice in an Indonesian EFL classroom. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics (IJAL)*, *7*(3), 687-694. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v7i3.9819

Siregar, I., & Siregar, M. S. (2023). Sociolinguistic competence in the development of communicative language teaching. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics (IJAL)*, *13*(1), 142-153.

Siregar, M. S., & Aziz, Z. A. (2020). Code-mixing in Indonesian social media: A sociolinguistic study. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics (IJAL)*, *10*(2), 432-441. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v10i2.28608

Sukyadi, D. (2015). The development of language policy and its implementation in Indonesia. *International Journal of Education*, *7*(2), 1-15.

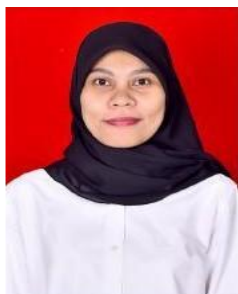
Sukyadi, D., & Mardiana, R. (2024). Translanguaging practices in Indonesian higher education: Navigating social and cultural boundaries. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics (IJAL)*, *14*(1).

Suryahati, T. (2020). Kompetensi linguistik dan performansi dalam pemerolehan bahasa kedua. *Jurnal Lingua Idea*, *11*(1), 12-25. https://doi.org/10.20884/1.jli.2020.11.1.2144

Suryanto, T., & Saefullah, H. (2022). Linguistic imperialism and power dynamics in English language education in Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*

(IJAL), *12*(2), 312-325. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v12i2.44567
Vertovec, S. (2007). Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *30*(6), 1024–1054. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870701595465
Wahyuni, S. (2021). The socio-semantics of language choice: Solidarity and identity in Indonesian multilingual contexts. *TEFLIN Journal, 32(1), 88-105. http://dx.doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v32i1/88-10530*(6), 1024–1054. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870701595465
Wei, L. (2018). Translanguaging as a practical theory of language. *Applied Linguistics*, *39*(1), 9–30. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amx039
Zein, S. (2018). From language policy to language practice: The case of Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics (IJAL)*, *8*(3), 680-690. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v8i3.15267

AUTHOR’S PROFILE



Yetty, S.S., M.Hum

was born in Ujung Pandang, on August 5th, 1988. The writer started her education at SD Negeri 7 Tondano, SMP Negeri 3 Makassar, and SMA Negeri 11 Makassar. Then, she completed her bachelor's degree at Universitas Negeri Makassar, English Literature Study Program in 2011. After that, she continued her master's degree at Hasanuddin University in English Language Studies (ELS) and graduated in 2017. Currently, the writer is an active lecturer at Khairun University in the English Language Education study program. Besides being an English lecturer, she is also a Content Creator, freelance translator (English-Indonesian and Indonesian-English), and reviewer of accredited and unaccredited national journals. In addition, the writer is also active in writing books. Six book chapters that have been written include *Structure Theory, Strategi Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, Advanced English Structure, Easy English Grammar, Advanced English Grammar,* and *Etnolinguistik*. In addition to teaching and writing books, the author also actively conducts research in the fields of Education, Literature, Linguistics, Translation, and Culture. Currently, the writer has several research articles published in various accredited and unaccredited national journals, as well as international journals.

CHAPTER 8
CODE-SWITCHING AND CODE-MIXING

Ria Saraswati
Universitas Esa Unggul, Jakarta
E-mail: ria.saraswati@esaunggul.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Multilingual interaction has become a defining feature of contemporary communication, particularly in societies where multiple languages coexist in close contact. In everyday encounters, speakers rarely rely on a single linguistic code; instead, they draw flexibly on their linguistic repertoires to achieve communicative effectiveness. Sociolinguistic research consistently shows that such language alternation is neither accidental nor indicative of linguistic inadequacy. Gumperz (1982)conceptualizes code-switching as a contextualization cue through which speakers signal shifts in meaning, social alignment, or interactional frames, highlighting language choice as a subtle yet powerful interpersonal resource. Similarly, Lanvers & Auer (2000) emphasizes that code-switching should be understood as a conversational practice embedded in the sequential organization of talk rather than as a static linguistic phenomenon. From this interactional perspective, switches emerge as locally meaningful actions shaped by unfolding discourse. In the Indonesian context, Musgrave (2014) and Nababan (1985)demonstrate how bilingual speakers strategically alternate between Indonesian and other languages to negotiate formality, intimacy, and authority. Such findings resonate with sociocultural linguistic views that position language alternation as socially motivated and culturally patterned rather than as individual linguistic failure (Nilep, 2006). Overall, multilingual

interaction should be understood as an adaptive communicative practice reflecting speakers' social awareness and interactional competence.

Taken together, studies on code-switching and code-mixing suggest that language alternation is best understood as a socially grounded practice shaped by context, audience, and communicative purpose. Rather than disrupting communication, switching between languages often enhances clarity, emphasis, and relational meaning. In educational settings, bilingual speakers alternate codes to scaffold understanding, manage classroom interaction, or clarify abstract concepts, particularly in multilingual classrooms (Cenoz & Genese, 2001). In professional and digital contexts, language alternation enables speakers to balance efficiency with interpersonal engagement, especially in online environments where identity and stance must be rapidly indexed. This flexibility allows speakers to respond to communicative demands that cannot always be fulfilled through a single language. As Deuchar (2020)) argues, bilingual speech reflects patterned linguistic behavior governed by grammatical and community norms rather than random mixing. Viewing multilingual interaction in this way shifts attention away from deficit-based interpretations toward an appreciation of speakers' strategic language use. Consequently, code-switching and code-mixing should be recognized as integral components of everyday interaction in multilingual societies.

The theoretical importance of code-switching and code-mixing lies in their capacity to illuminate the relationship between linguistic structure and social meaning. Early sociolinguistic approaches often treated language alternation as interference or deviation from monolingual norms. However, contemporary scholarship has decisively challenged this view. Myers-Scotton & Bolonyai (2001) Markedness Model proposes

that speakers make rational language choices in response to social expectations and communicative goals. From this perspective, code-switching becomes a deliberate act that negotiates social relationships and interactional rights. Gardner-Chloros (2009) further demonstrates that code-mixing reflects creative linguistic competence and follows identifiable grammatical patterns. Structural accounts also reveal that code-switching is constrained by grammatical principles shared with monolingual speech, as proposed by the Null Theory (Chan, 2008; MacSwan, 2005). In Southeast Asian contexts, Djenar (2007a) shows how Indonesian code-switching functions to construct politeness and stance. These studies collectively position language alternation as a rule-governed and socially meaningful communicative strategy.

Beyond individual interaction, code-switching and code-mixing function within broader structures of power, ideology, and social hierarchy. Language choice often reflects unequal access to symbolic capital associated with education, prestige, and institutional authority. Gumperz & Hymes (1972) distinguish between situational and metaphorical code-switching, illustrating how language alternation may respond to contextual change or symbolically redefine interaction. Heller (2007) further links multilingual practices to political and economic processes, particularly where certain languages carry higher market value. In urban Indonesia, English–Indonesian code-mixing frequently indexes modernity, educational background, and global orientation. Similar patterns have been observed in digital academic spaces, where code-switching functions as a form of digital face-work, enabling speakers to manage authority, solidarity, and politeness simultaneously. These patterns demonstrate that language alternation is inseparable from ideological positioning and social evaluation.

Another central dimension of code-switching and code-mixing is their role in identity construction and audience awareness. Bell (2009) Audience Design theory explains how speakers adjust language choices in response to interlocutors, while Bucholtz & Hall (2005) conceptualize identity as an interactional achievement rather than a fixed attribute. From this perspective, code-switching becomes a key resource for performing and negotiating social identities. Research on Indonesian digital discourse shows that young users employ code-mixing creatively on social media to project hybridity, humor, and cosmopolitan identity. In sum, code-switching and code-mixing are systematic, socially motivated practices reflecting the dynamic interplay between language, society, and identity. Understanding these phenomena enriches our view of multilingualism as a communicative resource and underscores the importance of examining language use within its broader social and cultural contexts.

DEFINING CODE-SWITCHING AND CODE-MIXING

Code-switching generally refers to the alternation between two or more languages or language varieties within a single conversation, sentence, or discourse event. This alternation can occur between sentences (inter-sentential switching) or within a single sentence (intra-sentential switching), depending on the communicative context and linguistic competence of the speaker. Scholars have emphasized that such alternation reflects speakers' ability to access multiple linguistic systems simultaneously rather than a lack of proficiency in any one language. According to Poplack (1980a), fluent bilinguals tend to switch languages at points where the surface structures of the two languages are compatible, indicating sensitivity to grammatical constraints. Similarly, Muysken (2000) notes that language alternation may involve insertion, alternation, or

congruent lexicalization, depending on the degree of structural integration. Code-mixing, on the other hand, is often used to describe the embedding of linguistic elements—such as words, phrases, or morphemes—from one language into another, resulting in a more blended form of language use. These patterns highlight that multilingual speech is systematic and linguistically motivated.

Although the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably, many scholars distinguish code-switching and code-mixing based on structural and functional criteria. Code-switching is typically associated with relatively clear boundaries between languages, whereas code-mixing involves a higher degree of morphosyntactic integration. Myers-Scotton (1997) argues that in mixed utterances, one language often provides the grammatical frame, while elements from another language are embedded within it, a process governed by systematic principles. Gardner-Chloros (2009) further suggests that the distinction between switching and mixing should be viewed as a continuum rather than a strict binary. In everyday communication, bilingual speakers may move fluidly along this continuum, combining features of both phenomena within a single interaction. Auer (1999) also emphasizes that the interpretation of language alternation depends heavily on interactional context, making rigid categorizations less useful in conversational analysis. As a result, both code-switching and code-mixing frequently coexist in naturally occurring multilingual discourse.

Importantly, both code-switching and code-mixing are rule-governed practices shaped by grammatical, cognitive, and sociocultural constraints. Multilingual speakers demonstrate a high level of linguistic competence when they alternate languages appropriately, adhering to both syntactic rules and community norms. Research in bilingual grammar has shown

that code-switching is constrained by principles similar to those governing monolingual speech production (MacSwan, 2005b). From a pragmatic perspective, language alternation also reflects speakers' sensitivity to audience design, topic relevance, and social relationships (Bullock & Toribio, 2009). These findings challenge earlier assumptions that mixed language use is random or deficient. Instead, they support the view that code-switching and code-mixing are sophisticated communicative strategies that enable speakers to achieve precision, express identity, and manage interactional meaning effectively. Consequently, language alternation should be understood as evidence of bilingual competence rather than linguistic interference.

STRUCTURAL MODELS (E.G., MATRIX LANGUAGE FRAMEWORK)

To explain how code-switching and code-mixing operate at the grammatical level, several structural models have been proposed within generative and sociolinguistic traditions. One of the most influential is the Matrix Language Framework (MLF) proposed by Myers-Scotton (1997). This framework argues that in mixed utterances, one language functions as the dominant or *matrix language*, providing the grammatical structure of the sentence, while the other serves as the *embedded language*, contributing mainly lexical items. For example, in the Indonesian English mixed utterance *"Saya sudah submit assignment itu kemarin,"* Indonesian functions as the matrix language by supplying the word order and grammatical markers (*saya sudah ... itu*), while English contributes the lexical item *submit assignment*. Studies by Jake & Myers-Scotton (1997) show that such patterns are highly systematic across bilingual communities. Rather than switching randomly, speakers consistently maintain the grammatical frame of one language,

demonstrating sensitivity to structural constraints. This example illustrates how bilingual speakers integrate elements from different languages while preserving grammatical coherence.

According to the Matrix Language Framework, not all elements from the embedded language can be inserted freely into a mixed construction. The matrix language determines word order, functional morphemes, and syntactic patterns, ensuring grammatical consistency (Myers-Scotton, 2002). For instance, in Indonesian–English code-mixing, function words such as tense markers or plural affixes typically follow Indonesian grammar. An utterance like *"Dia sedang working on the project"* is acceptable because Indonesian provides the progressive marker *sedang*, while English supplies the lexical phrase *working on the project*. In contrast, constructions that violate matrix language constraints may sound unnatural to bilingual speakers. Jake & Myers-Scotton (1997) report that bilingual speakers intuitively reject mixed forms that disrupt grammatical order. Muysken (2000) further notes that such acceptability judgments reflect deep grammatical knowledge rather than prescriptive rules. These examples show that code-mixing is constrained by linguistic principles, not by chance or limited proficiency.

Structural approaches such as the Matrix Language Framework demonstrate that code-mixing is not a sign of linguistic deficiency. Instead, it reflects speakers' ability to manage complex grammatical systems simultaneously. For example, a bilingual university student might say, *"Kalau kamu mau apply beasiswa itu, you need to prepare the documents early,"* smoothly alternating languages while maintaining syntactic clarity. MacSwan (2005a) argues that such bilingual utterances are governed by the same grammatical architecture as monolingual speech. Bullock & Toribio (2009) similarly emphasize that bilingual data should be treated as legitimate linguistic evidence rather than as marginal phenomena. These

perspectives challenge deficit-based views of bilingualism and highlight code-mixing as evidence of advanced linguistic competence. By analyzing real examples of bilingual speech, structural models contribute to a more inclusive understanding of grammar—one that recognizes multilingual practices as systematic, rule-governed, and theoretically valuable.

SOCIAL MEANINGS OF LANGUAGE ALTERNATION

Beyond grammatical structure, code-switching and code-mixing carry rich social meanings that extend far beyond linguistic form. Speakers frequently alternate languages to signal formality or informality, express emotions, emphasize points, or align themselves with specific social groups. Gumperz (1982) explains that such language choices function as contextualization cues through which speakers index social relationships and interactional intentions. For example, in Indonesian family conversations, switching to a local language such as Javanese may signal intimacy and shared cultural identity, as in *"Iyo, wis tak siapno kabeh, don't worry"*, where the local language conveys closeness while English adds reassurance. Conversely, the use of a global language such as English often indexes professionalism and authority, particularly in urban or institutional contexts (Heller, 2007). In workplace interactions, an Indonesian professional may say, *"Mohon segera ditindaklanjuti, because this is a priority issue,"* using English to reinforce urgency and institutional power. As Blommaert (2010) notes, such switches are not neutral but reflect access to symbolic capital and social positioning. These examples illustrate how code-switching enables speakers to negotiate social meaning dynamically.

Language alternation also functions as a strategic resource in managing discourse and interaction. Speakers may switch codes to quote others, mark topic shifts, or clarify meaning

during extended talk. Auer (1998) demonstrates that code-switching plays an important role in organizing conversational structure. In classroom settings, for instance, a lecturer may say, *"This theory is quite complex, jadi perhatikan bagian ini baik-baik,"* where the switch to Indonesian signals emphasis and ensures comprehension (Lin, 2013). Similarly, in workplace meetings, a manager might alternate languages to balance authority and solidarity, as in *"Deadline-nya ketat, but I know you can handle this,"* which simultaneously asserts power and offers encouragement (Janet Holmes & Stubbe, 2015). Such switches help speakers manage participation, maintain interactional flow, and negotiate roles. Rather than indicating communicative breakdown, these practices demonstrate pragmatic competence and sensitivity to institutional norms. Code-switching thus serves as an interactional tool that aligns discourse organization with social objectives.

The social meanings associated with code-switching are highly context-dependent and cannot be interpreted independently of the interactional setting. The same language switch may be understood differently depending on who is speaking, who is listening, and where the interaction takes place. As Auer (1999) argues, meaning emerges through sequential interaction and shared contextual knowledge. For example, in a student WhatsApp group, a message such as *"Capek banget hari ini, but still grateful tugasnya finally done"* may be interpreted as expressing shared academic stress and solidarity among peers. However, similar language use in a formal academic email might be perceived as inappropriate or unprofessional. Bucholtz & Hall (2005) further emphasize that language choices contribute to identity construction, making interpretation dependent on participants' expectations and positioning. These examples show that code-switching does not carry fixed meanings but gains significance through social

context, power relations, and communicative goals. Understanding code-switching, therefore, requires attention to both linguistic form and the broader social environment in which it occurs.

IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION AND AUDIENCE AWARENESS

Code-switching and code-mixing function as powerful resources for identity construction in multilingual contexts. Through deliberate language choice, speakers position themselves in relation to cultural, ethnic, and social affiliations (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Switching to a heritage language may signal ethnic solidarity, while shifting to a dominant or global language can index modernity or social mobility (Gumperz, 1982; Heller, 2007). Myers-Scotton (1993) argues that such choices reflect speakers' negotiation of social rights and obligations. In Indonesian urban settings, for instance, alternating between Indonesian and regional languages like Javanese often marks respect and intimacy (Djenar, 2007b). Similarly, the use of English in local discourse may assert professional or cosmopolitan identity (Blommaert, 2010). These patterns demonstrate that language alternation is a meaningful strategy for enacting identity rather than a random linguistic behavior.

Audience awareness plays a central role in shaping code-switching and code-mixing practices. Speakers continuously adjust their language choices based on their interlocutors' linguistic competence, social status, and expectations (Bell, 1984). Auer (1998) emphasizes that code-switching emerges as a locally meaningful action within conversational sequences. In multilingual classrooms in Indonesia, lecturers often alternate between English and Indonesian to balance academic authority with student comprehension (Lin, 2013; Musgrave, 2014;

Nababan, 1985). Holmes (2013) further notes that such shifts help manage power relations and interpersonal rapport. In workplace meetings, employees may switch to English when addressing supervisors to project professionalism, then revert to Indonesian for peer solidarity. These examples illustrate how audience design and identity performance are inseparable in multilingual interaction (Goffman, 1981).

In digital communication, code-mixing has become especially visible as users creatively construct hybrid identities. Social media platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and X enable multilingual speakers to blend languages fluidly, often combining English with Indonesian to express humor, trend awareness, or group belonging (Androutsopoulos, 2013). Bucholtz (2010) highlights that online identity is actively performed through linguistic styling. In Indonesian youth discourse, expressions like *"Honestly, capek banget today"* exemplify how code-mixing indexes emotional nuance and modern identity (Mardikantoro, Siroj, Utami, & Kurniati, 2023). Tagg (2015) further argues that digital code-mixing reflects community norms rather than individual deviation. These practices show that identity in online spaces is continuously negotiated through language alternation, reinforcing code-mixing as a legitimate and socially meaningful communicative strategy (Herring, 2013).

ANALYZING REAL CONVERSATIONAL DATA

Analysing authentic conversational data offers concrete evidence of how code-switching and code-mixing operate in real communicative settings. Rather than relying on introspection or elicited sentences, researchers examine naturally occurring interactions to understand when and how speakers alternate languages. Conversation Analysis (CA) has been particularly influential in this regard, emphasizing sequential organization

and interactional meaning (Auer, 1998; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). Gumperz (1982) demonstrates that code-switching often appears at discourse junctures such as topic shifts, repairs, or emphasis, functioning as a contextualization cue. Similarly, Li (2017) argues that bilingual speakers exploit language alternation to manage alignment and stance. For example, in Indonesian family conversations, speakers may switch from Indonesian to Javanese when expressing intimacy or emotional closeness. Such data reveal that language alternation is patterned, socially motivated, and interactionally meaningful rather than random.

Through systematic analysis of conversational data, researchers can identify recurring patterns in bilingual speech that reflect both grammatical constraints and social intentions. Studies by Myers-Scotton (1993) and Poplack (1980b) show that switches frequently occur at syntactic boundaries, supporting the view that bilingual speech follows structural rules. At the same time, interactional studies highlight the role of social meaning. Auer (1999) and Gardner-Chloros (2009) demonstrate that speakers switch codes to negotiate authority, signal humor, or manage interpersonal distance. In classroom discourse, for instance, Indonesian lecturers often alternate between English and Indonesian to explain complex concepts or regain students' attention. Such practices illustrate how linguistic structure and social context interact in shaping language choice. Analyzing real conversational data, therefore, allows researchers to capture the multifunctional nature of code-switching as both a grammatical and pragmatic phenomenon.

Importantly, empirical analysis of authentic data challenges deficit-based assumptions about bilingual speech. Earlier views often characterized code-switching as evidence of incomplete language mastery. However, research based on real interactions consistently contradicts this assumption. Grosjean (2008)

emphasizes that bilinguals are not two monolinguals in one person but possess an integrated linguistic system. Heller (2007) and Blommaert (2010) further show that multilingual practices are shaped by social histories and power relations rather than individual linguistic limitations. For example, in Indonesian workplace meetings, employees may switch to English to project professionalism or align with global corporate norms. Such data demonstrate strategic competence rather than confusion. By grounding analysis in authentic interactions, scholars reveal the systematic, purposeful, and socially embedded nature of bilingual communication.

Examining real conversational data also provides pedagogical value for students of linguistics and applied language studies. Exposure to authentic interactions helps learners move beyond abstract definitions toward a nuanced understanding of language use in context. Seedhouse (2010) argues that real data enable students to observe how meaning is co-constructed moment by moment. In digital contexts, studies by Androutsopoulos (2013) and Tagg (2015) show how code-mixing on social media reflects identity performance and audience design. For example, Indonesian students on WhatsApp groups often combine Indonesian, English, and slang to express humor or solidarity. Such examples highlight the dynamic and strategic nature of multilingual communication. Ultimately, analyzing real conversational data fosters a deeper appreciation of how speakers actively deploy linguistic resources to navigate everyday social interaction.

CONCLUSION

Code-switching and code-mixing are fundamental features of multilingual communication that reflect the complex interplay between language, society, and cognition. These practices are shaped not only by grammatical principles but also by social

meanings, identity construction, and audience awareness. Multilingual speakers do not alternate languages randomly; instead, they make informed and strategic choices based on contextual demands, interactional goals, and shared norms. Through code-switching, speakers can signal alignment, emphasize stance, manage interpersonal relationships, or mark boundaries between social roles. Similarly, code-mixing often reveals speakers' ability to integrate linguistic resources creatively while maintaining structural coherence. Rather than representing linguistic confusion or deficiency, these practices demonstrate a high level of communicative flexibility and cultural competence. They show how speakers skillfully mobilize their linguistic repertoires to achieve nuanced meanings that may not be easily conveyed through a single language.

Understanding code-switching and code-mixing allows us to conceptualize language as a dynamic and adaptive resource rather than a fixed system of rules. These phenomena highlight how speakers actively use language to navigate complex social realities, including power relations, group membership, and identity negotiation. In multilingual interactions, language choice becomes a tool for managing diversity and accommodating difference, enabling speakers to participate effectively in varied social contexts. As globalization, migration, and digital communication continue to intensify, language contact, code-switching, and code-mixing become increasingly visible in everyday life. They are not marginal or exceptional behaviors but central aspects of how language is used and experienced in contemporary societies. Recognizing this reality encourages a more inclusive understanding of multilingualism and challenges monolingual norms that often dominate language ideologies.

REFERENCES

Androutsopoulos, Jannis. (2013). Networked multilingualism: Some language practices on Facebook and their implications. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *19*(2), 185–205. doi:10.1177/1367006913489198

Auer, P. (1998). *Code Switching in Conversation: Language, interaction and Identity*. London: Routledge.

Auer, P. (1999). *Code-switching in Conversation: Language, Interaction and Identity*. Routledge.

Bell, A. (1984). Language Style as Audience Design. *Language in Society*, *13*(2), 145–204. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4167516

Bell, A. (2009). Language Style as Audience Design (pp. 265–275). doi:10.1007/978-1-349-92299-4_18

Blommaert, J. (2010). *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*. *Cambridge Approaches to Language Contact*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:DOI: 10.1017/CBO9780511845307

Bucholtz, M. (2010). *White Kids: Language, Race, and Styles of Youth Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:DOI: 10.1017/CBO9780511975776

Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005). Identity and Interaction: A Sociocultural Linguistic Approach. *Discourse Studies*, *7*, 585–614. doi:10.1177/1461445605054407

Bullock, B. E., & Toribio, A. J. (2009). The Cambridge Handbook of Linguistic Code-switching. On *Cambridge Handbooks in Language and Linguistics*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.co.id/books?id=fzdojxBpiMcC

Cenoz, J., & Genese, F. (2001). *Trends in Bilingual Acquisition*. (A. De Houwer & S. Gillis, Eds.). John Benjamins Publishing Company. Retrieved from http://atila-www.uia.ac.be/IASCL

Chan, B. H. S. (2008). Code-switching, word order and the lexical/functional category distinction. *Lingua*, *118*(6), 777–809. doi:10.1016/j.lingua.2007.05.004

Deuchar, M. (2020). Code-switching in linguistics: A position paper. *Languages*, *5*(2), 1–19. doi:10.3390/languages5020022

Djenar, D. N. (2007a). Self-Reference and Its Variation in Indonesian. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, *4*, 23–40.

Djenar, D. N. (2007b). *Semantic, pragmatic, and discourse perspectives of preposition use: a study of Indonesian locatives*. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.

Gardner-Chloros, P. (2009). *Code-switching*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.co.id/books?id=_5TwIiJ_A54C

Goffman, E. (1981). Forms of Talk. On *Conduct and Communication*. University of Pennsylvania Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.co.id/books?id=Z3bvx_T4Zu8C

Grosjean, F. (2008). *Studying Bilinguals*. Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/oso/9780199281282.001.0001

Gumperz, J. J. (1982). *Discourse Strategies*. *Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:DOI: 10.1017/CBO9780511611834

Gumperz, J. J., & Hymes, D. (1972). Social meaning in linguistic structure: Code-switching in Norway. In J. J. Gumperz & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Retrieved from https://books.google.co.id/books?id=ErNybD4cJqkC

Heller, M. (2007). Bilingualism: A Social Approach. In *Palgrave Advances in Language and Linguistics*. Palgrave

Macmillan UK. Retrieved from https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=CnaIDAAAQBAJ

Herring, S. C. (2013). Discourse in Web 2.0: Familiar, Reconfigured, and Emergent. In D. Tannen & A. M. Trester (Eds.), *Discourse 2.0: Language and New Media* (pp. 1–26). Georgetown University Press. doi:http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt4cg8wd.5

Holmes, Janet. (2013). An Introduction to Sociolinguistics. On *Learning about Language*. Taylor & Francis. Retrieved from https://books.google.co.id/books?id=iV_fAQAAQBAJ

Holmes, Janet, & Stubbe, M. (2015). *Power and Politeness in the Workplace: A sociolinguistic analysis of talk at work* (2nd Edition). London: Routledge. doi:https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315750231

Jake, Janice L, & Myers-Scotton, Carol. (1997). Codeswitching and Compromise Strategies: Implications for Lexical Structure. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *1*(1), 25–39. doi:10.1177/136700699700100103

Lanvers, U., & Auer, P. (2000). Code Switching in Conversation: Language, Interaction and Identity. *The Modern Language Review*, *95*, 1165. doi:10.2307/3736717

Li, W. (2017). Translanguaging as a Practical Theory of Language. *Applied Linguistics*, *39*. doi:10.1093/applin/amx044

Lin, A. (2013). Classroom Code-Switching: Three Decades of Research. *Applied Linguistics Review*, *4*. doi:10.1515/applirev-2013-0009

MacSwan, J. (2005a). A Minimalist Approach to Intrasentential Code-Switching. *Rivista Di Linguistica Mahootian*, *171*.

MacSwan, J. (2005b). Codeswitching and generative grammar: A critique of the MLF model and some remarks on “modified minimalism”. *Bilingualism: Language and*

Cognition, *8*, 1–22. Retrieved from https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:1021185

Mardikantoro, H., Siroj, B., Utami, E., & Kurniati, E. (2023). Investigating Indonesian language varieties in social media interactions: Implications to teaching practices. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *13*, 306–316. doi:10.17509/ijal.v13i2.63069

Musgrave, S. (2014). Language Shift and Language Maintenance in Indonesia (pp. 87–105). doi:10.1057/9781137455536_5

Muysken, P. (2000). *Bilingual Speech: A Typology of Code-Mixing*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.co.id/books?id=lJI7qrIKmokC

Myers-Scotton, C. (1993). *Social Motivations For Codeswitching: Evidence from Africa*. Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/oso/9780198239055.001.0001

Myers-Scotton, C. (1997). *Duelling Languages: Grammatical Structure in Codeswitching*. Clarendon Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.co.id/books?id=NuYdnTyKkdQC

Myers-Scotton, C. (2002). Contact Linguistics: Bilingual Encounters and Grammatical Outcomes. On *Oxford linguistics*. Oxford University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.co.id/books?id=krRcXJlJaMcC

Myers-Scotton, C., & Bolonyai, A. (2001). Calculating speakers: Codeswitching in a rational choice model. *Language in Society*, *30*, 1–28. doi:10.1017/S0047404501001014

Nababan, P. W. J. (1985). Bilingualism in Indonesia: Ethnic Language Maintenance and the Spread of the National Language. *Asian Journal of Social Science*, *13*, 1–18. Retrieved from https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:144867773

Nilep, C. (2006). Colorado Research in Linguistics. *Colorado Research in Linguistics (CRIL)*, *19*.

Poplack, S. (1980a). Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en español: Toward a typology of code-switching. *Linguistics*, *18*, 581–618. doi:10.1515/ling.1980.18.7-8.581

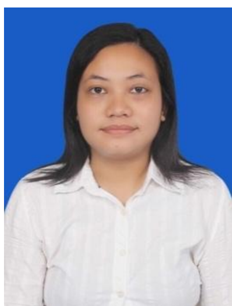
Poplack, S. (1980b). Sometimes I'll Start a Sentence in Spanish Y Termino en español: Toward a Typology of Code-Switching. *Linguistics*, *18*, 581–618. doi:10.1515/ling.1980.18.7-8.581

Sacks, H., Schegloff, E., & Jefferson, G. (1974). A Simple Systematic for the Organisation of Turn Taking in Conversation. *Language*, *50*, 696–735. doi:10.2307/412243

Seedhouse, P. (2010). The Interactional Architecture of the Language Classroom. *Bellaterra Journal of Teaching & Learning Language & Literature*, *1*, 1–13. doi:10.5565/rev/jtl3.32

Tagg, C. (2015). Exploring Digital Communication: Language in Action. On *Routledge Introductions to Applied Linguistics*. Taylor & Francis. Retrieved from https://books.google.co.id/books?id=ZowGCAAAQBAJ

AUTHOR'S PROFILE



Ria Saraswati

holds a doctoral degree in Applied Linguistics from Universitas Negeri Jakarta, where her research explored the intersection of linguistic theory and practical language application. She is currently a lecturer in the English Language Education Department at Universitas Esa Unggul, Indonesia. Over the course of her academic career, she has been actively engaged in teaching, curriculum development, and scholarly work that bridges theoretical perspectives with pedagogical practice. Her primary research interests lie in Linguistics, Translation Studies—particularly in the translation of culturally embedded expressions—and English Education. Within Translation Studies, she focuses on how cultural nuances can be preserved and conveyed effectively in target languages, an area that often intersects with her studies on cross-cultural communication. She has also conducted work in literature analysis, with a special emphasis on feminist perspectives, examining how gender roles and power dynamics are represented and negotiated in literary texts. In addition to her academic research, Ria has contributed to various educational initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of English teaching in diverse learning contexts. She integrates technology-enhanced learning, genre-based pedagogy, and context-specific English for Specific Purposes (ESP) training into her instructional approach. Her work often reflects a commitment to aligning language education with the evolving needs of learners, ensuring that students are equipped with both linguistic competence and critical cultural awareness. Through her combined expertise in linguistics, translation, literature, and pedagogy, she continues to contribute to academic discourse and practical advancements in English language education.

CHAPTER 9
LANGUAGE ATTITUDES AND IDEOLOGIES

Siti Kustini
Politeknik Negeri Banjarmasin, Banjarmasin
E-mail: kustini@poliban.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Language is far more than a neutral tool for communication. Every time we speak, we reveal not only what we want to say, but also who we are, where we come from, and which social groups we belong to or aspire to join. The way we react to different ways of speaking—whether we find an accent charming or grating, whether we view certain grammatical constructions as educated or improper—reflects deeply held beliefs about language that extend far beyond grammar and vocabulary. These beliefs, known as language attitudes and ideologies, shape social interactions, educational opportunities, employment prospects, and even legal outcomes.

Language attitudes refer to the subjective evaluations, beliefs, and feelings that individuals and communities hold about languages, dialects, accents, and their speakers. Language ideologies, meanwhile, are broader systems of ideas about language that circulate within societies, often naturalizing and legitimizing particular forms of linguistic inequality. While attitudes operate at the individual level, ideologies function at the societal level, though the two are intimately connected.

Understanding language attitudes and ideologies is crucial for sociolinguists because these phenomena help explain why certain language varieties gain prestige while others become stigmatized, how linguistic discrimination operates in society, and why languages shift or disappear over time. This chapter

explores the nature of language ideologies, examines how prestige and stigma attach to different varieties, investigates the mechanisms of linguistic prejudice and discrimination, reviews the research methods used to study language attitudes, and presents case studies that illuminate the real-world consequences of these attitudes for language maintenance and shift.

LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND THEIR SOCIAL EFFECTS

There are several definitions for the concept of language ideologies. Silverstein (1979) defined language ideologies as "sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use" (p. 193). These ideologies are not neutral descriptions of linguistic reality but serve specific social functions, often naturalizing existing power relations and social inequalities. Irvine and Gal (2000, 35, cited in Haviland 2003, 764) define language ideologies as'. . . the ideas with which participants and observers frame their understanding of linguistic varieties and map those understandings onto people, events, and activities that are significant to them'. For Spolsky (2004, 14), language ideology'. . . is language policy with the manager left out, what people think should be done. Language practices, on the other hand, are what people actually do'. Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (2006) define language ideologies as'. . . ingrained, unquestioned beliefs about the way the world is, the way it has to be with respect to language'.

One of the most pervasive language ideologies in modern nation-states is the standard language ideology, which holds that there exists a single "correct" or "proper" form of a language that should be used in formal contexts and taught in schools. Lippi-Green (2012) described this ideology as encompassing several interrelated beliefs: the notion that there is one correct

way to speak and write, that this standard is socially neutral and accessible to all, and that deviations from the standard reflect laziness, ignorance, or moral failing. This has profound impacts on educational settings. The standard language shapes curriculum development, assessment practices, and teacher expectations. Students who arrive at school speaking non-standard varieties may be incorrectly identified as having language deficits or cognitive limitations, when in fact they are competent speakers of rule-governed linguistic systems (Smitherman, 1977).

Another influential language ideology is monoglossism, the belief that monolingualism is the normal or natural state and that speaking multiple languages or code-switching between varieties is problematic. Silverstein (1996) argued that monoglossic ideologies reflect Western European nationalist traditions that sought to create unified nation-states with single national languages. This ideology marginalizes multilingual communities and delegitimizes linguistic practices such as code-switching, which speakers employ strategically for social and communicative purposes. García (2009) critiqued monoglossic ideologies in education, advocating instead for translanguaging approaches that recognize bilingual students' linguistic resources as assets rather than deficits.

The social effects of language ideologies extend to language policy and planning. Governments often implement policies based on ideological assumptions about language standardization, national unity, and linguistic purity. Blommaert (1999) analyzed how language ideologies shaped post-colonial language policies in Africa, where colonial languages were sometimes retained as official languages based on ideologies of modernization and development, while indigenous languages were relegated to subordinate positions. These policies have

long-lasting effects on educational access, economic opportunities, and cultural vitality.

Recent scholarship has emphasized that language ideologies are not monolithic but contested and negotiated. Communities and individuals resist dominant ideologies by developing counter-narratives that revalue stigmatized varieties. Hip-hop culture, for example, has transformed African American English from a stigmatized vernacular into a global linguistic resource associated with authenticity, creativity, and resistance (Alim, 2006). These examples illustrate that while language ideologies powerfully shape social realities, they are also subject to challenge and change.

PRESTIGE AND STIGMATIZED VARIETIES

The concepts of prestige and stigma are central to understanding language attitudes and their social consequences. Linguistic varieties do not possess inherent prestige or stigma; rather, these evaluations reflect the social positions of their speakers. As Trudgill (2000) noted, when we describe a language variety as prestigious, we are actually referring to the prestige of the social group that speaks it. The association between linguistic forms and social evaluation creates a system in which certain ways of speaking are rewarded with social capital, while others are penalized.

Labov (1966) distinguished between overt prestige and covert prestige in his foundational study of language variation in New York City. Overt prestige refers to the positive evaluation associated with standard or high-status varieties, which speakers recognize and often aspire to in formal contexts. Covert prestige, by contrast, describes the positive value that non-standard or vernacular varieties hold within their speech communities, particularly in informal contexts where local solidarity and authenticity are valued. This distinction reveals that language

attitudes are context-dependent and that speakers navigate multiple, sometimes competing systems of linguistic evaluation. The dynamics of overt and covert prestige help explain patterns of style-shifting and linguistic variation. Speakers adjust their language use across contexts, often moving toward standard varieties in formal situations and toward vernacular varieties among in-group members. This linguistic flexibility demonstrates sophisticated sociolinguistic awareness rather than linguistic deficiency. Eckert (2000) documented how adolescents in a Detroit-area high school used phonological variables to construct and signal social identities, with some features carrying prestige among "jocks" oriented toward institutional success and others valued by "burnouts" who resisted school culture.

Standard or prestige varieties typically share several social characteristics. They are associated with educated, economically powerful, and politically dominant groups. They are codified in grammar books, dictionaries, and style guides, creating the impression of fixedness and correctness. They serve as the medium of formal institutions including government, education, and media. Importantly, the standardization process is always a social and political project rather than a linguistic necessity. Milroy and Milroy (1999) argued that standardization involves not just the selection and codification of particular forms but also the elaboration of functions and the acceptance of these forms as legitimate by the wider community.

Stigmatized varieties, conversely, are associated with groups that lack social, economic, or political power. These varieties are often described using negative metaphors suggesting corruption, laziness, or deterioration. Common characterizations include claims that speakers of stigmatized varieties "mumble," "slur their words," or "don't speak properly." Such descriptions reveal more about social attitudes

than linguistic reality. Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (2016) emphasized that stigmatized varieties follow systematic rules just as standard varieties do and that perceived "errors" are actually grammatical features of these varieties.

The stigmatization of varieties often intersects with other forms of discrimination. When linguistic features associated with ethnic minorities, immigrants, or working-class communities face negative evaluation, linguistic prejudice reinforces and naturalizes racism, xenophobia, and classism. Flores and Rosa (2015) developed the concept of "raciolinguistic ideologies" to describe how listeners' perceptions of linguistic forms are shaped by racial assumptions about speakers, such that the same pronunciation may be evaluated differently depending on whether the speaker is perceived as white or non-white.

Efforts to challenge stigmatization face significant obstacles because linguistic prejudice is often seen as acceptable or even meritocratic. People who would never openly express racial or ethnic prejudice may freely disparage others' accents or dialects, believing they are making judgments about education or refinement rather than prejudiced assessments. Lippi-Green (2012) termed this "the last back door to discrimination," noting that linguistic prejudice provides a socially acceptable way to discriminate against groups based on their cultural or ethnic backgrounds.

LINGUISTIC PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

Linguistic prejudice—the negative evaluation of individuals based on their language use—constitutes a pervasive yet often overlooked form of discrimination. Unlike explicit forms of prejudice that are increasingly recognized as unacceptable in many societies, linguistic prejudice frequently operates with social sanction, cloaked in discourses of correctness, education,

and professional standards. This section examines the mechanisms through which linguistic prejudice operates, its intersections with other forms of discrimination, and its material consequences for affected individuals and communities.

Linguistic prejudice typically operates through a process Lippi-Green (2012) called the "linguistic subordination process." This process involves several steps: identifying the language variety of a subordinated group as distinct from the standard, establishing that the non-standard variety is inherently inferior, imposing the dominant standard as universally correct, and blaming speakers of non-standard varieties for their failure to adopt the standard. Crucially, this process positions linguistic differences as individual deficiencies rather than products of social inequality, thereby absolving institutions of responsibility for discriminatory practices.

The legitimacy accorded to linguistic prejudice stems partly from widespread beliefs about language standardization and correctness. Many people genuinely believe that standard varieties are objectively superior—clearer, more logical, or more beautiful—than non-standard varieties. This belief persists despite overwhelming linguistic evidence that all varieties are equally complex and systematic. Wolfram (1998) argued that combating linguistic prejudice requires not just celebrating linguistic diversity but directly challenging the linguistic subordination process and the standard language ideology that supports it.

Linguistic profiling—making judgments about individuals based on speech characteristics—enables discrimination even in contexts where visual cues to race or ethnicity are absent. Baugh (2000) coined this term to describe how telephone interactions allow housing and employment discrimination to occur before face-to-face contact. Voice-based profiling has expanded with technology, as automated systems and voice recognition

software may exhibit biases reflecting the linguistic prejudices encoded in their training data.

The intersection of linguistic prejudice with other forms of discrimination amplifies its effects. Flores and Rosa (2015) demonstrated that raciolinguistic ideologies mean that the "same" linguistic forms are perceived differently depending on the racialized identities of speakers. A pronunciation judged as acceptable from a white speaker may be criticized as incorrect from a speaker of color, regardless of actual differences in production. This finding reveals that linguistic prejudice cannot be separated from racism, as racialized listening shapes how linguistic performance is evaluated.

Resistance to and challenges of linguistic prejudice take multiple forms. Legal advocacy seeks to expand protections against language-based discrimination. Educational initiatives aim to increase linguistic awareness among teachers and challenge deficit perspectives. Community organizations work to validate stigmatized varieties and build pride in linguistic heritage. Scholarly activism by sociolinguists involves expert testimony in discrimination cases, public education, and collaboration with affected communities. Despite these efforts, linguistic prejudice remains deeply entrenched, sustained by powerful ideologies and institutional practices.

RESEARCH METHODS: SURVEYS AND MATCHED-GUISE TESTS

Studying language attitudes requires methodological approaches that can capture both explicit beliefs and implicit biases. Researchers have developed various techniques to investigate how people evaluate different languages and dialects, what social meanings they associate with linguistic features, and how these attitudes influence behavior. This section examines major methodological approaches, with

particular attention to attitude surveys and matched-guise tests, along with their strengths, limitations, and applications.

Direct attitude surveys represent the most straightforward approach to studying language attitudes. These instruments ask respondents to provide explicit evaluations of languages, dialects, accents, or specific linguistic features. Survey questions may use various formats, including Likert scales, semantic differential scales, open-ended questions, and ranking tasks. Preston (1989) pioneered perceptual dialectology methods that ask non-linguists to identify dialect regions on maps and rate different regions on characteristics such as correctness and pleasantness. These methods reveal folk linguistic beliefs and demonstrate how language attitudes reflect broader social geographies.

The advantages of direct surveys include their efficiency for collecting data from large samples, their ability to investigate a wide range of attitude dimensions, and their straightforwardness for respondents. However, direct surveys face significant limitations. They capture only conscious, explicit attitudes that respondents are willing to report. Social desirability bias may lead respondents to provide answers they believe are appropriate rather than their genuine attitudes, particularly regarding stigmatized varieties or groups. People may not be fully aware of their language attitudes or may lack the metalinguistic awareness to articulate them clearly.

To address some limitations of direct surveys, researchers have developed indirect methods that assess attitudes through behavioral responses rather than self-reports. The matched-guise technique, introduced by Lambert et al. (1960), represents the most influential indirect method in language attitude research. This technique involves having the same speaker record passages in different languages or dialects (the "guises"), then asking respondents to evaluate recordings on various dimensions

such as intelligence, friendliness, trustworthiness, and social class. Because respondents believe they are evaluating different speakers rather than different varieties produced by the same speaker, their responses reveal attitudes toward the varieties rather than individual speakers.

The original matched-guise study by Lambert et al. (1960) investigated attitudes toward English and French in Montreal. Bilingual speakers recorded the same content in both languages, and both English-Canadian and French-Canadian respondents evaluated the recordings. The study revealed that both groups rated English speakers more favorably on competence-related traits, while French speakers received higher ratings on solidarity-related traits. Strikingly, French-Canadian respondents also showed more favorable attitudes toward English speakers, suggesting internalized linguistic prejudice against their own community's language.

Subsequent matched-guise studies have investigated attitudes toward numerous varieties worldwide. These studies consistently reveal that standard or prestige varieties receive higher ratings on status-related dimensions such as intelligence, education, and ambition, while vernacular varieties often receive higher ratings on solidarity-related dimensions such as friendliness, trustworthiness, and sense of humor. This pattern reflects the distinction between overt and covert prestige discussed earlier, demonstrating that different varieties carry different types of social value.

The matched-guise technique has evolved through various adaptations. Verbal guise techniques use different speakers who are native to different varieties, acknowledging that achieving truly matched guises by having single speakers produce multiple varieties authentically is extremely difficult. While this adaptation sacrifices the control of having identical voices, it gains authenticity of production. Garrett (2010) provided a

comprehensive review of speaker evaluation methods, discussing the trade-offs among different approaches and advocating for triangulation across multiple methods.

One limitation of traditional matched-guise studies is their use of extended speech samples, which may not reflect how attitudes operate in everyday interactions. Research on indexicality and linguistic variation has shown that even brief exposure to specific linguistic features can trigger social evaluations. Campbell-Kibler (2007) developed methods using shorter manipulated speech samples to investigate attitudes toward specific variables, finding that a single variable, like (ING)—pronouncing "-ing" as [ɪŋ] versus [ɪn]—could significantly affect listener judgments about speakers' education, formality, and regional identity.

Implicit association tests (IATs) represent another approach to assessing attitudes that may not be consciously available or that respondents are unwilling to report. IATs measure reaction times in categorization tasks, operating on the principle that people respond faster when making associations that are cognitively or culturally ingrained. Researchers have adapted IATs to language attitudes, investigating implicit biases toward accents or varieties. However, the application of IATs to language attitudes remains less developed than in other areas of social psychology, and questions remain about what exactly is being measured and how it relates to actual linguistic behavior.

Societal treatment studies examine how different varieties are actually treated in institutional contexts, providing ecologically valid evidence of language attitudes in action. This approach includes analyses of media representations, examination of language policies, review of educational materials, and documentation of discrimination cases. Baugh's (2003) research on housing discrimination used a societal treatment approach, demonstrating actual discriminatory

behavior rather than relying on reported attitudes. Similarly, studies examining employment discrimination through audit studies or analysis of hiring outcomes provide evidence of attitudes as manifested in consequential decisions.

Qualitative methods offer complementary approaches to understanding language attitudes. Interviews allow researchers to explore the reasoning behind attitudes, the contexts in which they apply, and how they connect to speakers' broader social experiences and identities. Focus groups can reveal how language attitudes are negotiated in social interaction. Ethnographic observation documents how attitudes play out in natural settings and how speakers respond to the evaluation of their language use. These methods provide rich contextual understanding that surveys and experimental methods cannot capture.

Contemporary research increasingly advocates for mixed-methods approaches that combine quantitative and qualitative techniques. Such integration allows researchers to identify patterns across populations while also understanding individual and community-level meanings and experiences. For example, a study might use surveys to document widespread attitudes, matched-guise tests to investigate implicit biases, and interviews with affected speakers to understand how they experience and respond to linguistic prejudice.

Recent methodological innovations involve analyzing language attitudes as manifested in digital spaces. Social media data provides access to authentic discourse about language, allowing researchers to study metalinguistic commentary, complaints about language use, and negotiations of linguistic appropriateness. Corpus-based approaches can identify patterns in how different varieties are represented and discussed. These digital methods offer new possibilities but also raise ethical considerations about privacy and consent.

Critical considerations in language attitudes research include attention to who is conducting research, who benefits from it, and how findings are used. Community-based participatory research approaches involve communities in research design and interpretation, ensuring that studies address community priorities and that findings serve community interests. Charity Hudley and Mallinson (2017) exemplified this approach in their work with African American communities, combining rigorous research methods with explicit goals of challenging linguistic discrimination and supporting community empowerment.

CASE STUDIES IN LANGUAGE ATTITUDES AND LANGUAGE SHIFT

Examining specific cases of language attitudes and their effects on language maintenance or shift provides concrete illustrations of the theoretical concepts and research methods discussed earlier. This section presents several case studies that demonstrate how language attitudes interact with social, political, and economic forces to shape linguistic landscapes and speaker communities.

The case of African American English in the United States exemplifies how persistent negative attitudes toward a stigmatized variety affect speakers across generations and social domains. Despite extensive linguistic research establishing African American English as a systematic, rule-governed variety with West African origins and a distinct developmental history, negative attitudes persist among both white and Black Americans. Baugh (2000) documented linguistic profiling affecting African Americans in housing and employment, demonstrating material consequences of linguistic prejudice. The 1996 Oakland Ebonics controversy revealed intense public resistance to recognizing African American English in

educational settings, with proposals to use students' home language as a bridge to standard English provoking accusations of lowering standards.

Recent scholarship has examined how African American English speakers navigate linguistic prejudice. Young et al. (2014) investigated code-switching among African American students, finding sophisticated management of linguistic resources across contexts but also psychological costs associated with constantly monitoring and modifying language use. The phenomenon of "linguistic insecurity"—speakers' negative evaluation of their own language variety—affects African American English speakers who internalize dominant negative attitudes. However, resistance to linguistic subordination also occurs through cultural movements that revalue African American English as a marker of authenticity and racial solidarity, particularly in hip-hop and other cultural expressions.

Singapore's language policies and evolving attitudes toward Singlish provide a case study in top-down language engineering and grassroots resistance. The government has promoted a multilingual policy with English as the primary medium of education and interethnic communication, alongside Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil as official languages representing major ethnic communities. However, the colloquial variety known as Singlish—a creole incorporating elements from English, Mandarin, Malay, and other languages—has emerged as a widely used vernacular. Government campaigns have repeatedly attempted to stigmatize Singlish through the "Speak Good English Movement," positioning it as bad English that harms Singapore's international competitiveness.

Wee (2005) analyzed resistance to these stigmatizing campaigns, documenting how Singaporeans increasingly embrace Singlish as a marker of national identity and local authenticity. Despite official disapproval, Singlish appears in

cultural productions, advertising, and political discourse. The case illustrates tensions between instrumental orientations toward language—viewing English as a tool for economic participation—and identity functions that Singlish serves. It also demonstrates the limits of governmental power to dictate language attitudes and practices, as speakers continue using Singlish despite sustained official opposition.

The status of Irish in Ireland represents an unusual case of a language that has high symbolic status but limited functional use. Irish holds official status and occupies an important place in national identity, yet only a small minority uses it as their primary language outside Gaeltacht regions. Attitudes toward the Irish are generally positive, with most Irish people expressing support for the language and its preservation. However, these positive attitudes do not translate into widespread active use. Ó Riagáin (1997) investigated this attitude-behavior gap, finding that practical factors, including limited opportunities for use, inadequate teaching methods, and English dominance in economic life, constrain Irish use despite favorable attitudes.

Recent initiatives seek to increase Irish use beyond symbolic domains through immersion education, media development, and the creation of Irish-language social spaces. The case highlights that maintaining threatened languages requires more than positive attitudes; it demands institutional support, functional domains where the language provides communicative advantages, and intergenerational transmission. The persistence of positive attitudes toward Irish despite limited use suggests that attitudes alone are insufficient to reverse language shift without addressing the material conditions that favor dominant languages.

These case studies illustrate several key principles regarding language attitudes and language shift. First, attitudes do not exist

in isolation but reflect and reinforce broader power relations, economic structures, and political arrangements. Second, attitude change is possible but requires sustained effort addressing both individual beliefs and institutional practices. Third, gaps often exist between expressed attitudes and actual behavior, as practical considerations may override attitudinal preferences. Fourth, resistance to linguistic subordination occurs alongside reproduction of dominant attitudes, creating complex and sometimes contradictory patterns. Finally, successful language maintenance or revitalization requires comprehensive approaches addressing attitudes, institutional support, functional domains of use, and intergenerational transmission.

CONCLUSION

Language attitudes and ideologies represent fundamental aspects of how language functions in social life. This chapter has demonstrated that the evaluations individuals and communities make about different ways of speaking are not arbitrary personal preferences but systematic patterns reflecting and reinforcing social hierarchies, power relations, and cultural values. Understanding language attitudes requires examining the ideological frameworks through which linguistic varieties acquire social meanings, the mechanisms through which certain varieties gain prestige while others become stigmatized, the processes of linguistic prejudice and discrimination, the methods researchers use to study these phenomena, and the real-world consequences visible in case studies of language maintenance and shift.

The concept of language ideologies reveals that beliefs about language are never neutral descriptions but serve specific social functions. The standard language ideology, monoglossic ideologies, and native speaker ideologies all work to naturalize the linguistic practices of dominant groups while marginalizing

others. These ideologies operate through processes including iconization, recursiveness, and erasure, transforming social differences into seemingly natural linguistic ones. Recognizing the ideological nature of language attitudes represents a crucial first step toward challenging linguistic subordination.

The distinction between prestige and stigmatized varieties illuminates how social evaluation attaches to linguistic forms based on the social positions of their speakers rather than any inherent qualities of the varieties themselves. The concepts of overt and covert prestige help explain patterns of linguistic variation and style-shifting, revealing the sophisticated sociolinguistic competence speakers demonstrate as they navigate multiple systems of linguistic value. However, the material consequences of speaking stigmatized varieties—in education, employment, housing, healthcare, and the legal system—demonstrate that linguistic prejudice is far from abstract, causing real harm to individuals and communities.

Linguistic prejudice operates as a powerful yet often socially acceptable form of discrimination. The linguistic subordination process positions non-standard varieties as inferior while absolving institutions of responsibility for discriminatory practices. The intersections of linguistic prejudice with racism, classism, and xenophobia reveal how language-based discrimination reinforces broader systems of inequality. Challenging linguistic prejudice requires not only celebrating linguistic diversity but directly confronting standard language ideology and the structures that maintain linguistic hierarchies.

Research methods for studying language attitudes have evolved to address the complexity of both explicit and implicit evaluation. Direct surveys, matched-guise tests, societal treatment studies, and qualitative methods each offer particular insights while facing specific limitations. Contemporary

research increasingly adopts mixed-methods approaches that combine quantitative patterns with qualitative understanding. Methodological choices carry ethical implications regarding who controls research, whose interests it serves, and how findings are used, highlighting the importance of community-engaged approaches.

Case studies of African American English, Singlish, and Irish illustrate how language attitudes interact with historical, political, economic, and social forces to shape linguistic landscapes. These cases demonstrate both the power of negative attitudes to drive language shift and the possibility of attitude change through deliberate intervention. They reveal that successful language maintenance requires comprehensive approaches addressing not only attitudes but also institutional support, functional domains of use, and the material conditions that shape language choices.

Language attitudes matter because language matters—not as an abstract system but as a fundamental aspect of human social life through which we construct identities, build relationships, access opportunities, and participate in communities. When particular ways of speaking are stigmatized and their speakers face discrimination, language becomes a mechanism for maintaining inequality. When linguistic diversity is recognized as a resource rather than a problem, and when all speakers' linguistic practices are respected, language can contribute to more just and equitable societies. Achieving this goal requires sustained attention to language attitudes and ideologies, critical examination of our own linguistic biases, and commitment to challenging the systems that transform linguistic difference into social disadvantage.

REFERENCES

Alim, H. S. (2006). *Roc the mic right: The language of hip hop culture*. Routledge.

Baugh, J. (2000). Racial identification by speech. *American Speech, 75*(4), 362–364. https://doi.org/10.1215/00031283-75-4-362

Baugh, J. (2003). Linguistic profiling. In A. Ball, S. Makoni, G. Smitherman, & A. Spears (Eds.), *Black linguistics: Language, society, and politics in Africa and the Americas* (pp. 155–168). Routledge.

Blommaert, J. (Ed.). (1999). *Language ideological debates*. Mouton de Gruyter.

Campbell-Kibler, K. (2007). Accent (ING), and the social logic of listener perceptions. *American Speech, 82*(1), 32–64. https://doi.org/10.1215/00031283-2007-002

Charity Hudley, A. H., & Mallinson, C. (2017). “We want to speak good, but not too good”: Calibrating community research methods to community language ideologies. In K. Beeching & H. Woodfield (Eds.), *Researching sociopragmatic variability: Perspectives from variational, interlanguage and contrastive pragmatics* (pp. 263–283). Palgrave Macmillan.

Eckert, P. (2000). *Linguistic variation as social practice: The linguistic construction of identity in Belten High*. Blackwell.

Flores, N., & Rosa, J. (2015). Undoing appropriateness: Raciolinguistic ideologies and language diversity in education. *Harvard Educational Review, 85*(2), 149–171. https://doi.org/10.17763/0017-8055.85.2.149

García, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Garrett, P. (2010). *Attitudes to language*. Cambridge University Press.

Irvine, J. T., & Gal, S. (2000). Language ideology and linguistic differentiation. In P. V. Kroskrity (Ed.), *Regimes of language: Ideologies, polities, and identities* (pp. 35–84). School of American Research Press.

Labov, W. (1966). *The social stratification of English in New York City*. Center for Applied Linguistics.

Lambert, W. E., Hodgson, R. C., Gardner, R. C., & Fillenbaum, S. (1960). Evaluational reactions to spoken languages. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 60*(1), 44–51. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0044430

Lippi-Green, R. (2012). *English with an accent: Language, ideology, and discrimination in the United States* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Milroy, J., & Milroy, L. (1999). *Authority in language: Investigating standard English* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Ó Riagáin, P. (1997). *Language policy and social reproduction: Ireland 1893–1993*. Clarendon Press.

Preston, D. R. (1989). *Perceptual dialectology: Nonlinguists' views of areal linguistics*. Foris.

Silverstein, M. (1979). Language structure and linguistic ideology. In P. R. Clyne, W. F. Hanks, & C. L. Hofbauer (Eds.), *The elements: A parasession on linguistic units and levels* (pp. 193–247). Chicago Linguistic Society.

Silverstein, M. (1996). Monoglot "standard" in America: Standardization and metaphors of linguistic hegemony. In D. Brenneis & R. K. S. Macaulay (Eds.), *The matrix of language: Contemporary linguistic anthropology* (pp. 284–306). Westview Press.

Smitherman, G. (1977). *Talkin and testifyin: The language of Black America*. Houghton Mifflin.

Spolsky, B. (2004). *Language policy*. Cambridge University Press.

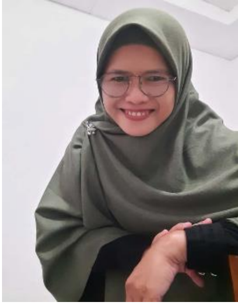
Trudgill, P. (2000). *Sociolinguistics: An introduction to language and society* (4th ed.). Penguin Books.

Wolfram, W., & Schilling-Estes, N. (2006). *American English: Dialects and variation* (2nd ed.). Blackwell.

Wolfram, W., & Schilling-Estes, N. (2016). *American English: Dialects and variation* (3rd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

Young, V. A., Barrett, R., Young-Rivera, Y., & Lovejoy, K. B. (2014). *Other people's English: Code-meshing, code-switching, and African American literacy*. Teachers College Press.

AUTHOR’S PROFILE



Siti Kustini

is an English lecturer at the State Polytechnic of Banjarmasin, Indonesia. She earned her Master’s and Doctoral degrees in English Language Education from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia and currently teaches English courses in the Department of Electrical Engineering, with a strong focus on developing students’ English skills in line with their field of study. Her research interests include English Language Teaching (ELT), technology integration in EFL learning, materials development, as well as multimodality and multiliteracies in EFL education.

CHAPTER 10
LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Sitti Agustina
Universitas Halu Oleo, Kendari Sultra
E-mail: Sittiagustina97@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Language, culture, and identity constitute a foundational triad in the study of human communication and social life (Joseph, 2003). Scholars across linguistics, anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies have long emphasized that language is not a neutral or merely technical instrument for conveying information, but a socially embedded practice that reflects and shapes cultural meanings and identity formations. Sapir (1921) and Whorf (1956) famously argued that language influences habitual thought and worldview, suggesting that linguistic structures are deeply intertwined with cultural cognition. Although strong versions of linguistic determinism have been debated, the consensus remains that language and culture are mutually constitutive.

In sociolinguistics, language is understood as a symbolic resource through which speakers position themselves in relation to others. Bourdieu et al., (1991) conceptualizes language as a form of symbolic capital, unevenly distributed and regulated by power relations. Certain ways of speaking are legitimized, institutionalized, and rewarded, while others are marginalized. Consequently, language becomes a key site for the production and reproduction of social inequality as well as identity negotiation.

In the Indonesian context, the relationship between language, culture, and identity is particularly complex.

Indonesia is home to more than 700 local languages, alongside Bahasa Indonesia as the national and unifying language. While Bahasa Indonesia functions as a powerful symbol of national identity and cohesion, local languages continue to index ethnic identity, local knowledge systems, and cultural belonging. The coexistence of national, regional, and global languages creates layered identities that Indonesians navigate in everyday interaction.

Globalization, migration, urbanization, and digital communication have further intensified identity dynamics. Individuals—especially youth—frequently engage in multilingual practices, code-switching between Indonesian, local languages, and global languages such as English. These practices challenge essentialist notions of identity and call for a more fluid, performative understanding. This chapter explores these dynamics by examining language as a cultural symbol, ethnolinguistic identity and group boundaries, heritage language maintenance, youth identity performance, and issues of authenticity and belonging, with particular attention to Indonesian and local contexts.

LANGUAGE AS CULTURAL SYMBOL

Beyond functioning as a repository of collective meanings, language as a cultural symbol also operates as a semiotic mechanism through which power, legitimacy, and social differentiation are produced and reproduced. Bourdieu et al., (1991) conceptualizes language as *symbolic capital* circulating within a *linguistic market*, where certain languages or varieties are institutionally legitimized while others are devalued. In this framework, the value of a language does not lie in its structural properties, but in its recognition by dominant institutions such as the state, the education system, and the media. Speakers who master legitimized linguistic forms gain symbolic power, while

speakers of marginalized languages may experience what Bourdieu terms *symbolic violence*—a process whereby linguistic hierarchies are naturalized and internalized.

This theoretical perspective is particularly relevant to the Indonesian sociolinguistic landscape. Bahasa Indonesia, as the national language, occupies a hegemonic symbolic position shaped by state ideology and nation-building discourse. Since its institutionalization as the language of education, administration, and mass media, Bahasa Indonesia has come to symbolize national unity, modernity, and upward mobility (Sneddon, 2003). Fluency in standard Indonesian is often equated with intellectual competence, professionalism, and civic legitimacy. Consequently, linguistic practices become a means through which individuals are evaluated and socially classified.

At the same time, English has acquired a parallel symbolic status as a language of globalization and transnational capital. Blommaert (2010) argues that global languages function as *indexical resources* that signal access to global networks and economic opportunity. In urban Indonesian contexts, particularly among middle-class youth, English proficiency—or even partial use of English expressions—serves as a marker of cosmopolitan identity. The frequent appearance of English in advertising, higher education, and digital media reinforces its association with innovation, prestige, and future-oriented aspirations. However, the symbolic elevation of English simultaneously contributes to the marginalization of local languages, which are increasingly positioned outside narratives of progress.

Local languages in Indonesia, despite their rich cultural and historical significance, often occupy a subordinated position within this symbolic hierarchy. Languages such as Tolaki, Bugis, Butonese, or Javanese are frequently associated with rural life, tradition, and informality. In many cases, these

languages are perceived as inappropriate for formal domains such as education, governance, or professional interaction. Schieffelin et al. (1998) note that such ideological associations are not inherent but socially constructed through repeated discourse that links linguistic forms to social values. As a result, local languages may be valued emotionally but devalued instrumentally.

Concrete examples can be observed in ritual and customary contexts. In Tolaki culture, ceremonial speech during adat events—such as *mosehe* rituals or marriage negotiations—employs highly metaphorical language, parallelism, and culturally embedded symbols. These speech forms function not only to convey information but to enact authority, harmony, and social order. However, outside these ritual spaces, Tolaki is often excluded from formal institutions, leading younger speakers to associate it with limited social mobility. Similar dynamics are found in Bugis culture, where traditional expressions embedded in *pappaseng* (ancestral advice) carry deep moral authority, yet are increasingly absent from everyday youth discourse.

The symbolic marginalization of local languages has tangible consequences for language attitudes and intergenerational transmission. Parents may consciously choose to speak Indonesian at home, believing it will better prepare children for academic success. Fishman (1991) argues that such decisions, while rational at the individual level, cumulatively accelerate language shift at the community level. Over time, local languages risk being confined to symbolic or ceremonial functions rather than serving as living means of daily communication.

Youth occupy a particularly critical position in negotiating these symbolic tensions. Young speakers often navigate between affective attachment to local languages and instrumental

orientation toward Indonesian and English. This negotiation is reflected in widespread code-switching and hybrid linguistic practices. Rather than indicating linguistic deficiency, such practices align with what Bucholtz & Hall (2005) describe as *identity performance*, where speakers strategically mobilize linguistic resources to index multiple affiliations simultaneously. In digital spaces, for example, Indonesian youth may incorporate local lexical items into Indonesian or English-dominated discourse as a way of asserting localized identity within global platforms.

Thus, language as a cultural symbol does not merely reflect shared meanings and values; it actively structures social imaginaries and future trajectories. Symbolic hierarchies attached to languages influence how speakers envision success, evaluate belonging, and position themselves within broader socio-economic systems. As Blommaert (2010) emphasizes, linguistic resources are unevenly distributed, and access to valued forms of language profoundly shapes life chances. Understanding language as a cultural symbol therefore requires attention not only to meaning and identity, but also to power, ideology, and inequality.

ETHNOLINGUISTIC IDENTITY AND GROUP BOUNDARIES

While ethnolinguistic identity is often discussed in terms of shared belonging, it is crucial to recognize that such identity is relational, situational, and historically produced, rather than static or homogeneous. Giles (1977) Ethnolinguistic Vitality framework highlights that the strength of an ethnolinguistic group depends on factors such as demographic presence, institutional support, and status. In contexts where these factors are unevenly distributed, ethnolinguistic identity becomes more vulnerable and contested. Language, in this sense, functions not

only as a marker of identity but also as an index of a group's relative power within society.

In Indonesia's multilingual ecology, ethnolinguistic identity is continuously reshaped through everyday interaction across ethnic boundaries. Code-switching between Indonesian and local languages is not merely a communicative convenience but a symbolic act of boundary negotiation. When speakers shift from Indonesian to a local language such as Tolaki, Bugis, or Javanese, they are not only signaling shared ethnicity but also invoking culturally specific norms of respect, hierarchy, and intimacy. These linguistic shifts index what Gumperz (1982) terms *contextualization cues*, which guide interlocutors' interpretations of social meaning.

At the same time, ethnolinguistic boundaries may be strategically softened or reinforced depending on social context. In interethnic urban settings, speakers may downplay local linguistic features to avoid exclusion or to claim a broader national identity. Conversely, in intra-group settings, the deliberate use of local accents or honorifics may function as a gatekeeping mechanism that distinguishes authentic members from outsiders. Such practices illustrate that ethnolinguistic identity is actively performed and policed through language use.

However, the symbolic marking of boundaries through language can also produce exclusion and inequality. Linguistic discrimination based on accent or regional variety remains a persistent issue in educational and professional domains. Speakers of non-standard Indonesian or strong regional accents may be perceived as less educated or less capable, reflecting what Lippi-Green (2012) identifies as *standard language ideology*. In Indonesia, this ideology is reinforced through schooling and media, where standard Indonesian is presented as the only legitimate form of public expression, marginalizing regional linguistic identities.

These dynamics are further complicated by language policy and state ideology. While Indonesia officially recognizes linguistic diversity, institutional support for local languages remains limited. Educational curricula often prioritize Indonesian and foreign languages, leaving local languages confined to symbolic or extracurricular domains. This uneven institutional recognition weakens ethnolinguistic vitality and contributes to a gradual language shift, particularly among younger generations.

From a critical sociolinguistic perspective, ethnolinguistic identity must therefore be understood as embedded within structures of power, ideology, and historical inequality. Language policies, media representation, and educational practices do not merely reflect linguistic diversity but actively shape which identities are legitimized and which are marginalized. As Bucholtz & Hall (2005) argue, identity emerges through interaction and is always linked to processes of authorization and illegitimation.

Examining ethnolinguistic identity through the lens of group boundaries reveals that language is a central site of social struggle. Boundaries are not simply lines of cultural difference; they are arenas where belonging is negotiated, contested, and sometimes denied. In multilingual societies such as Indonesia, understanding these dynamics is essential for addressing issues of linguistic justice, social inclusion, and cultural sustainability.

HERITAGE LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND TRANSMISSION

While Fishman (1991) foregrounds intergenerational transmission as the cornerstone of heritage language maintenance, subsequent scholarship has emphasized that such transmission is deeply shaped by ideological, institutional, and socioeconomic factors. Language maintenance does not occur

automatically within families; rather, it requires sustained commitment in environments where dominant languages exert strong pressure. As Spolsky (2004) argues, language practices are inseparable from language beliefs and language management, all of which influence whether a heritage language is transmitted or abandoned.

In the Indonesian context, language shift is closely tied to broader processes of modernization and nation-building. Bahasa Indonesia, as the language of formal education and upward mobility, occupies a dominant position within what Blommaert (2010) terms the *sociolinguistic order*. Parents' decisions to prioritize Indonesian are often motivated by pragmatic concerns rather than negative attitudes toward local languages. Nevertheless, these decisions gradually restrict heritage language use to limited domains, such as interaction with older family members or ceremonial contexts.

Interethnic marriage further complicates heritage language transmission. In many mixed-ethnicity households, Indonesian functions as the neutral and mutually intelligible medium of communication, reducing opportunities for consistent exposure to local languages. Over time, children in such households may develop receptive competence without productive fluency, leading to what Valdés (2001) describes as *heritage speaker asymmetry*. These speakers may identify strongly with their ethnic heritage while lacking full linguistic proficiency.

Educational institutions play a decisive role in either supporting or undermining heritage languages. Although Indonesia's language policy rhetorically acknowledges linguistic diversity, practical implementation remains uneven. Mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) initiatives in early schooling—implemented in some regions—have demonstrated positive effects on literacy development, cultural identity, and cognitive flexibility. However, limited resources,

teacher training, and curricular materials often constrain their sustainability. Without long-term institutional commitment, such programs risk becoming symbolic rather than transformative.

Community-based initiatives provide an alternative space for heritage language maintenance. Cultural associations, religious institutions, and customary councils often serve as sites where heritage languages retain functional value. In many local communities, traditional ceremonies, oral narratives, and customary law proceedings continue to rely on local languages, reinforcing their symbolic and pragmatic importance. Yet, when these languages are restricted to ritual domains, their everyday communicative vitality may continue to decline.

Digital media has emerged as a new and potentially powerful domain for heritage language use. Social networking platforms, messaging applications, and online video content allow younger speakers to engage with heritage languages beyond traditional settings. The use of local languages in memes, short videos, or online storytelling illustrates how digital spaces can recontextualize heritage languages as modern and relevant. As Androutsopoulos (2015) notes, digitally mediated language practices enable new forms of identity alignment and linguistic creativity, particularly among youth.

Crucially, heritage language maintenance is underpinned by language ideology. Attitudes toward local languages—as either valuable cultural resources or obstacles to progress—significantly influence transmission outcomes. When heritage languages are framed solely as symbols of tradition rather than as viable tools for contemporary life, younger generations may internalize perceptions of limited utility. This ideological framing contributes to what Fishman (2001) characterizes as *reversing language shift* challenges, where symbolic recognition is insufficient without functional expansion.

Therefore, sustainable heritage language maintenance in Indonesia requires a multi-level approach that integrates family practices, community engagement, educational policy, and ideological change. Recognizing heritage languages as living, adaptive systems—rather than relics of the past—is essential for ensuring their continued transmission. Without such recognition, heritage languages risk being reduced to emblematic tokens of identity rather than active mediums of intergenerational communication.

YOUTH CULTURE, STYLE, AND IDENTITY PERFORMANCE

Building on Bucholtz & Hall's (2005) interactional approach, youth identity is best understood as a performative and stylistic achievement that emerges through repeated linguistic and semiotic practices. Young people do not merely reflect pre-existing identities; they actively construct them by selecting, combining, and recontextualizing linguistic resources available in their sociocultural environment. This process aligns with Eckert & Wenger's (2005) notion of *communities of practice*, where identity is shaped through shared activities, norms, and styles within peer groups.

In Indonesia, youth language practices vividly demonstrate this performative dimension. The creative mixing of Indonesian, local languages, English, and digital slang—often labeled as *bahasa gaul*—functions as a marker of generational belonging. Such hybrid forms index youthfulness, informality, and cultural competence within peer networks. Rather than signaling linguistic erosion, these practices reflect what Rampton (1995) describes as *crossing*, in which speakers strategically appropriate linguistic forms associated with different social groups to negotiate identity and affiliation.

Local languages also play a significant role in youth identity performance, albeit in recontextualized forms. Young speakers may employ local lexical items, phonological features, or pragmatic markers within predominantly Indonesian discourse to signal local pride or regional affiliation. For example, the insertion of Tolaki, Bugis, or Javanese expressions in casual conversation or online posts can function as an index of in-group solidarity, even when full fluency in the local language is limited. These selective uses illustrate how local linguistic resources are adapted to contemporary youth culture.

Style, as a semiotic construct, extends beyond language to include dress, music, and digital aesthetics. Eckert (2008) argues that linguistic style operates as part of a broader *stylistic system* through which social meaning is produced. In Indonesian youth culture, linguistic style often aligns with musical genres such as hip-hop or pop, as well as with online influencer culture. Accent, intonation, and lexical choices become emblematic of particular subcultures, enabling youth to position themselves within global and local cultural flows simultaneously.

Digital platforms significantly intensify youth identity performance by transforming language use into a public and persistent record. Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter (X) function as arenas of stylization where linguistic creativity is highly visible and socially evaluated. Androutsopoulos (2015) notes that digital discourse encourages heightened reflexivity, as users consciously design their language for imagined audiences. In these spaces, code-mixing and playful language manipulation become key strategies for achieving visibility and social capital.

Importantly, digital environments also reshape power relations in language use. While traditional institutions such as schools may privilege standard Indonesian, online spaces allow youth to legitimize non-standard and hybrid forms. This shift

challenges dominant language ideologies and creates alternative norms of linguistic value. However, digital visibility also exposes youth to new forms of surveillance and judgment, reinforcing the idea that identity performance is both enabling and constrained.

Overall, youth language practices in Indonesia reveal identity as fluid, negotiated, and context-dependent. Through stylistic innovation and digital mediation, young people navigate tensions between local heritage and global participation, tradition and modernity, conformity and creativity. These practices underscore the central role of youth culture in transforming linguistic norms and redefining the relationship between language and identity in contemporary society.

CULTURAL AUTHENTICITY AND BELONGING

Cultural authenticity is frequently invoked in discussions of language and identity, often implying adherence to an idealized or 'pure' form of language associated with tradition, ancestry, and normative cultural expectations. However, contemporary sociolinguistic scholarship problematizes such essentialist views by emphasizing that authenticity is not an intrinsic property of language or speakers, but a socially constructed and ideologically mediated concept. As Coupland (2003) argues, authenticity functions as a discursive resource that is mobilized to authorize certain identities while delegitimizing others. Claims to authenticity, therefore, are never neutral; they are embedded in power relations and often operate as mechanisms for regulating who is entitled to belong to a particular linguistic or cultural community.

In the Indonesian context, these dynamics are particularly visible due to the country's long-standing multilingual ecology and the dominance of Bahasa Indonesia as the national language. Heritage speakers of local languages—such as

Javanese, Bugis, Tolaki, or Butonese—are frequently evaluated against prescriptive norms that privilege fluency in traditional registers (e.g., krama in Javanese or ritualized speech in adat contexts). Speakers whose linguistic practices exhibit code-mixing, simplification, or influence from Indonesian are often labeled as “kurang asli” (not authentic enough). For example, urban youth who speak Javanese Ngoko infused with Indonesian lexical items may be perceived by elders as having lost their cultural roots, despite their continued participation in local traditions and kinship networks. Such judgments reveal how authenticity is narrowly defined through linguistic form rather than lived cultural engagement.

These authenticity discourses have direct implications for belonging. Belonging is not merely a matter of linguistic competence but hinges on social recognition and affective acceptance. Bucholtz & Hall (2005) suggest that identity is relationally produced and requires uptake by others to be validated. In many Indonesian communities, speakers may demonstrate substantial receptive competence in a local language yet refrain from active use due to fear of being ridiculed for speaking “tidak fasih” or “tidak sesuai adat.” Consequently, authenticity policing can produce exclusion, discouraging younger or semi-speakers from claiming membership in their own ethnolinguistic communities.

Conversely, there are numerous empirical cases in Indonesia where belonging is sustained despite limited linguistic proficiency. Migrant descendants in urban centers such as Kendari, Makassar, or Jakarta may not speak their heritage language fluently, yet maintain a strong sense of belonging through participation in communal rituals, food practices, kinship obligations, and shared historical narratives. For instance, members of the Tolaki or Butonese diaspora communities may predominantly use Indonesian in daily

interaction while still identifying strongly with their ethnic group through symbolic practices and emotional attachment. These cases demonstrate that belonging is multimodal and affective, not reducible to linguistic purity.

A critical approach to authenticity, therefore, reframes hybrid and multilingual practices not as signs of cultural erosion but as legitimate expressions of contemporary identity. Rather than asking whether speakers are "authentic enough," this perspective foregrounds how individuals negotiate belonging within shifting sociolinguistic realities. In the Indonesian setting, where language contact and mobility are the norm, recognizing diverse repertoires allows for a more inclusive understanding of cultural membership. Authenticity, when decoupled from rigid linguistic norms, becomes a dynamic process grounded in lived experience, enabling broader forms of belonging that reflect the realities of modern Indonesian multilingual life.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored the intricate relationship between language, culture, and identity by drawing together the theoretical discussions and empirical observations presented in the preceding sections. Building on earlier chapters that conceptualized identity as socially constructed and discursively produced, this chapter has demonstrated that language is not merely a communicative tool, but a central cultural symbol through which individuals articulate affiliation, negotiate difference, and claim or are denied belonging. Language operates simultaneously as a marker of ethnolinguistic identity, a resource for identity performance, and a site where power relations surrounding authenticity are enacted.

The discussion of heritage language maintenance directly extends the arguments developed in earlier chapters concerning identity performance and linguistic legitimacy. As previously

shown, identity is not fixed but performed across contexts, audiences, and interactional spaces. Heritage language practices among Indonesian youth exemplify this dynamic: language use reflects both continuity with ancestral traditions and adaptation to contemporary sociolinguistic realities. Rather than signaling cultural loss, hybrid practices—such as code-switching between local languages and Indonesian—function as strategic performances of identity that allow speakers to navigate multiple social worlds. This finding reinforces the earlier theoretical claim that linguistic hybridity should be understood as a resource rather than a deficit.

Furthermore, the chapter's engagement with authenticity builds explicitly on the critical perspective introduced earlier, which problematizes essentialist notions of language and culture. As discussed in previous sections, authenticity is not an inherent quality of speech forms but a socially negotiated and ideologically charged construct. The empirical examples from Indonesia illustrate how authenticity is often mobilized to regulate group boundaries, privileging speakers who conform to idealized linguistic norms while marginalizing those whose repertoires reflect multilingual realities. This reinforces the argument that authenticity functions as a gatekeeping mechanism that shapes access to cultural membership and social recognition.

The concept of belonging, as elaborated in this chapter, provides a crucial link between language practices and lived experience. Connecting back to earlier discussions of recognition and identity validation, the chapter shows that belonging is contingent not only on linguistic competence but also on social acceptance and emotional attachment. Individuals may actively identify with an ethnolinguistic community yet experience exclusion when their language practices are deemed insufficiently authentic. Conversely, strong senses of belonging

may persist even in the absence of full linguistic proficiency, sustained through shared cultural practices, collective memory, and affective ties. These findings underscore the relational and negotiated nature of belonging introduced in earlier chapters.

In the broader multilingual context of Indonesia, where local, national, and global forces intersect, this chapter confirms that rigid one-to-one associations between language and identity are analytically inadequate. The layered identities observed among heritage speakers and multilingual youth highlight the fluidity and context-dependence of identity construction. This aligns with the earlier theoretical framework that positions identity as performative and situational, shaped by shifting sociopolitical conditions and everyday interactional choices.

Ultimately, this chapter reinforces the central argument of the study: recognizing linguistic diversity and supporting heritage language practices are essential not only for cultural sustainability but also for social inclusion. When authenticity is reimagined as flexible and inclusive, and belonging is understood as relational rather than prescriptive, space is created for diverse identity trajectories to be acknowledged and valued. By synthesizing insights from language ideology, identity performance, authenticity, and belonging, this chapter contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how individuals and communities in Indonesia construct meaning, assert membership, and navigate the complexities of an increasingly interconnected and multilingual world.

REFERENCES

Androutsopoulos, J. (2015). Networked multilingualism: Some language practices on Facebook and their implications. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *19*(2), 185–205.

Blommaert, J. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P., Coleman, J. S., & Coleman, Z. W. (1991). *Social theory for a changing society*. Westview Press Boulder, CO.

Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005). Identity and interaction: A sociocultural linguistic approach. *Discourse Studies*, *7*(4–5), 585–614.

Coupland, N. (2003). Sociolinguistic authenticities. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *7*(3).

Eckert, P. (2008). Variation and the indexical field 1. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *12*(4), 453–476.

Eckert, P., & Wenger, E. (2005). Communities of practice in sociolinguistics. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *9*(4).

Fishman, J. A. (1991). *Reversing language shift: Theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance to threatened languages* (Vol. 76). Multilingual matters.

Fishman, J. A. (2001). *Can threatened languages be saved?: Reversing language shift, revisited: A 21st century perspective* (Vol. 116). Multilingual Matters.

Giles, H. (1977). Social psychology and applied linguistics: Towards an integrative approach. *ITL-International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *35*(1), 27–42.

Gumperz, J. J. (1982). *Language and social identity* (Issue 2). Cambridge University Press.

Joseph, J. (2003). *Language and identity*. Springer.

Lippi-Green, R. (2012). *English with an accent: Language, ideology and discrimination in the United States*. Routledge.

Rampton, B. (1995). Language crossing and the problematisation of ethnicity and socialisation. *Pragmatics. Quarterly Publication of the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA)*, *5*(4), 485–513.

Sapir, E. (1921). An introduction to the study of speech. *Language*, *1*(1), 15.

Schieffelin, B. B., Woolard, K. A., & Kroskrity, P. V. (1998).

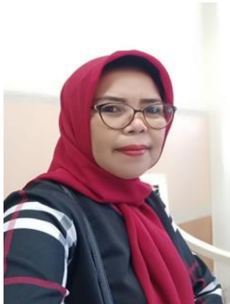
Language ideologies: Practice and theory (Vol. 16). Oxford University Press.

Sneddon, J. (2003). The Indonesian Language. *University of New South Wales Press Ltd*.

Spolsky, B. (2004). *Language policy*. Cambridge university press.

Whorf, B. L. (1956). *Language, thought, and reality: selected writings of….(Edited by John B. Carroll.).*

AUTHOR'S PROFILE



Sitti Agustina, S.S. M.Hum
was born in Ujung Pandang on August 30, 1971, she obtained her Master's degree in Linguistics from Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, in 2007. In addition to her role as a lecturer at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Halu Oleo University, she is actively engaged in various research activities, including The Study *Implementation of Ethnopedagogy Based on Tolaki Cultural Local Wisdom Values in Character Development of Students in South Konawe Regency* (2019). She also consistently contributes to academic publications. Among her works are *The Correlation Between Students' Habit of Watching English Movies and Their Vocabulary Mastery at the Eleventh Grade of MAN 1 Raha*; *Psychological Factors Affecting Students' Oral Presentation at the English Education Department of Halu Oleo University* (2022); and *The Impact of Using the Hangman Game on Students' Vocabulary Achievement at the Second Grade of SMAN 1 Kontukowuna* (2022). Furthermore, she is active in authoring books and book chapters. Her most recent publications include *TOEFL Grammar Made Simple* and *Semantics and Meaning-Making in Language*.

CHAPTER 11
LANGUAGE POLICY AND PLANNING

Loso Judijanto
IPOSS Jakarta
E-mail: losojudijantobumn@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Language policy and planning (LPP) constitutes a critical area of sociolinguistic inquiry that examines deliberate interventions designed to influence language form, function, and use within speech communities. Language policy encompasses explicit and implicit rules, principles, and ideologies that govern language use, while language planning refers to organized efforts to influence language structure and social functions. This dual conceptualization recognizes that policy provides the normative framework, embodied in legislation, regulations, and institutional guidelines, whereas planning involves operational interventions that translate policy intentions into practice (Tollefson & Perez-Milans, 2018).

Contemporary scholarship emphasizes that language policy consists of three interrelated components: language practices (habitual patterns of language selection and use), language beliefs or ideologies (attitudes about language and its role in society), and language management (efforts to modify practice through various interventions). The distinction between policy as a normative framework and planning as operational intervention remains analytically sound, though researchers increasingly recognize their interdependence. Language planning has traditionally been defined as deliberate, future-oriented, systematic efforts to influence language code, use, and

speaking, typically undertaken by governmental authorities for specific communities (Trinick et al., 2020).

Recent approaches conceptualize LPP as multi-stage public policy processes involving issue emergence, agenda-setting, formulation, implementation, and evaluation. This framework positions language policy within broader public policy studies, recognizing that language decisions emerge from complex political negotiations rather than purely technical linguistic considerations. Macro-meso-micro linkages provide analytical scaffolding for understanding how policies formulated at national levels are interpreted and adapted at institutional levels before being enacted in classroom and community contexts (Tollefson & Perez-Milans, 2018).

The macro level encompasses government-formulated policies, including constitutional provisions and national legislation. The meso level involves institutional stakeholders such as language agencies, educational authorities, and civil service organizations that interpret and operationalize macro-level directives. The micro level focuses on individual actors, teachers, learners, and community members, who implement, resist, or transform policies through everyday practices. Critically, ethnographic research reveals that these levels are not discrete strata but rather constitute a continuum of intertwining elements, with bidirectional influences flowing between levels (Gallo-Lozano, 2025).

Unwritten ideologies and everyday community practices play decisive roles in shaping policy outcomes. Research demonstrates that official policies may be subverted, reinterpreted, or enhanced through local implementation, creating ideological and implementational spaces where actors negotiate policy meanings. These spaces represent critical sites where dominant language ideologies can be challenged and

where multilingual practices can flourish despite monoglossic policy orientations (N. H. Hornberger et al., 2018).

Multilingual societies confront fundamental tensions among identity affirmation, rights protection, mobility enhancement, and communicative efficiency. Language choices involve complex trade-offs: policies promoting linguistic diversity may enhance cultural inclusion but potentially constrain individual mobility. In contrast, policies prioritizing dominant or global languages may facilitate economic advancement but erode linguistic heritage. The mobility-inclusion trade-off represents a particularly acute challenge, as exclusive emphasis on inclusion can restrict mobility through material or symbolic barriers. In contrast, a singular focus on mobility may undermine local specificity and rootedness (Grin et al., 2018).

Linguistic diversity and social cohesion exist in dynamic tension, with policies requiring careful calibration to maintain both values simultaneously. Economic dimensions further complicate policy choices, as cost-benefit analyses of language planning interventions must account for both tangible factors (educational infrastructure, translation services, materials development) and intangible considerations (identity affirmation, cultural preservation, cognitive advantages of multilingualism). Balancing these competing values demands nuanced policy frameworks that reject zero-sum thinking in favor of additive approaches, recognizing multiple legitimate goals (Duarte, 2024).

Effective support for linguistic diversity combines curricular space for minority languages, assessment accommodations, and teacher education that normalizes translanguaging and plurilingual repertoires in classrooms. Where policy is limited to symbolic recognition without resources or accountability, minority languages tend to recede from high-stakes domains despite formal status, revealing the

implementation gap common in multilingual states (Mokoena et al., 2025).

PRINCIPLES OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

Fishman's macro-sociological model provided foundational insights into language maintenance and shift, emphasizing domains of language use, diglossia arrangements, and intergenerational transmission as critical variables. This framework illuminated how languages occupy differentiated functional spaces within societies and how transmission patterns determine long-term vitality (Ketchassop, 2020).

Haugen's four-stage framework—selection, codification, elaboration, and implementation-propagation—remains influential in conceptualizing language standardization processes. Selection involves choosing which language or variety receives official recognition; codification encompasses standardization procedures, including graphization, grammatication, and lexication; implementation addresses educational spread and societal acceptance; elaboration involves functional development to meet expanding communicative needs. This model emphasizes that status planning (selection and implementation) and corpus planning (codification and elaboration) must proceed in a coordinated fashion (Khider, 2024).

Cooper's definition of language planning as addressing "who plans what for whom and how" directed attention toward planning agents, targets, and processes. This formulation highlighted that language planning is never attempted for its own sake but rather serves non-linguistic goals, including national integration, economic development, and social mobility (Cooper, 1998).

Hornberger's integrative framework distinguishes between policy planning (focused on status issues) and cultivation planning (concerned with corpus development), while introducing the continua approach that conceptualizes language phenomena as existing along multiple intersecting continuua rather than as discrete categories. The two-dimensional model examining form-function relationships and the six-dimensional analytical framework addressing context, development, content, and media of biliteracy provide sophisticated tools for analyzing multilingual educational contexts (Irshad et al., 2024).

The continuum of biliteracy framework spans oral-written, monoglossic-heteroglossic, and other dimensions, enabling researchers to map how educational policies and practices position learners along these continua. Application to multilingual educational contexts reveals how ideological spaces opened by progressive policies can be filled or allowed to close through implementation decisions. This framework proves particularly valuable for analyzing mother-tongue-based multilingual education programs where transitions between languages occur across grade levels (N. H. Hornberger, 2020).

Ruiz's tri-part orientation framework—language as problem, language as right, and language as resource- has achieved paradigmatic status in LPP scholarship. The language-as-problem orientation frames linguistic diversity as threatening social cohesion and requiring assimilationist solutions. This deficit framing underlies policies mandating dominant language acquisition and suppressing minority languages (Hult & Hornberger, 2016).

The language-as-right orientation positions language as a fundamental human entitlement requiring legal protections and institutional guarantees. This framework supports constitutional provisions for minority language use in education, courts, and public administration. The language-as-resource orientation

reconceptualizes multilingualism as a societal asset, emphasizing additive bilingualism and the cognitive, economic, and diplomatic advantages of linguistic diversity (Hult & Hornberger, 2016).

These orientations function as analytical heuristics for examining values embedded in policy debates and as latent emic concepts when actors express language beliefs. Implications for policy design, goal-setting, and implementation are profound: problem orientations generate subtractive programs, rights orientations support maintenance efforts, and resource orientations foster the enrichment model (Zeeshan, 2023).

Ethnography of language policy and planning (ELPP) emerged as scholars recognized that understanding policy requires examining layered ideological and implementational spaces across macro-meso-micro levels. ELPP foregrounds tensions between heteroglossic language practices and monoglossic ideologies, revealing how local actors negotiate, resist, and transform top-down policies (N. H. Hornberger et al., 2018).

Critical language policy perspectives examine power, inequality, and raciolinguistic ideologies that structure language hierarchies. Raciolinguistic frameworks demonstrate how language ideologies intersect with racialization processes to marginalize speakers of non-dominant varieties. Language management theory conceptualizes management as a processual behavior toward language problems occurring across simple (discourse-based) and organized (institutional) dimensions. Ideological and implementational spaces in institutions represent critical sites where policies are enacted, resisted, or transformed (Nirwana et al., 2025).

Language change occurs through both intentional interventions and demographic, market-driven shifts operating independently of deliberate planning. Overt policies manifest in

explicit statutes, constitutional provisions, and formal regulations, while covert policies operate through implicit norms, institutional practices, and societal expectations. The distinction between de jure and de facto language policies recognizes that official pronouncements may diverge substantially from actual practices (Cushing, 2020).

Policy-practice gaps constitute productive analytic spaces revealing tensions between policy intentions and implementation realities. Research demonstrates that gaps emerge from multiple sources: naive policy design divorced from contextual realities, inadequate resources, stakeholder resistance, weak monitoring mechanisms, and systemic governance failures. Understanding these gaps requires examining both policy formulation processes and implementation dynamics, with particular attention to how local actors interpret and enact policies (Arrona & Zabala-Iturriagagoitia, 2019).

STATUS, CORPUS, AND ACQUISITION PLANNING

Status planning allocates languages to functional domains, establishing their relative standing within societies. Official language designation involves the legal establishment of languages for governmental, judicial, and administrative functions. Nationalization processes link specific languages to citizenship and national identity, often serving nation-building objectives. Minority language charters and protection frameworks, exemplified by European instruments, provide legal safeguards for non-dominant languages (Oliver & Boaz, 2019).

Language standardization and proscription establish authoritative norms for pronunciation, style, and register. Standard-setting creates gatekeeping mechanisms that grant linguistic capital to those mastering prestige varieties while

marginalizing speakers of non-standard forms. Stigma attached to non-standard varieties generates educational equity implications, as students commanding only non-prestige varieties face systematic disadvantage (Landini, 2025).

Functional allocation distinguishes intranational communication (requiring domestic lingua francas for interethnic dialogue) from international communication (demanding global languages for economic competitiveness). Singapore's multi-pronged model exemplifies sophisticated status planning, establishing English as the administrative language while maintaining Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil as official languages with domain-specific functions (Singh et al., 2025).

Corpus planning addresses language form through standardization, codification, graphization, modernization, and terminology development. Linguistic standardization involves developing authoritative grammars and dictionaries that establish normative reference points. Relations between regional varieties and the standard constitute ongoing negotiation, with tensions between homogenization and pluralism (Gobbo, 2023). Graphization encompasses writing system selection and reform, spelling harmonization, and technology compatibility enhancement. Script changes, exemplified by Turkey's adoption of the Latin alphabet, profoundly affect literacy development and cultural orientations. Modernization strategies expand vocabulary for science, technology, and law through either purist approaches favoring indigenous resources or mixed strategies incorporating international borrowing. Terminology unification promotes sectoral standardization and curriculum coherence, requiring multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms (Costa-Carreras, 2024).

Acquisition planning influences language learning and user acquisition through curricular requirements, teacher preparation,

and resource allocation. Educational medium policies determine whether mother-tongue-based approaches or dominant language immersion prevails, with profound implications for early literacy outcomes and identity affirmation. Teacher agency and local interpretation introduce variability in policy implementation, as educators adapt mandates to contextual realities (Abdurrizal et al., 2022).

Foreign language, second language, and bilingual programs involve trade-offs between depth and coverage. Alignment between medium policies and materials development proves critical for program success. Intergenerational language transmission requires early childhood resources, heritage language schooling, community-led initiatives, and domain preservation strategies (Kotkov, 2021). Policies that support home and community transmission (early childhood resources, heritage-language schooling) help counter domain loss for minority and Indigenous languages. Community-led initiatives integrated with formal schooling improve continuity of use, identity affirmation, and long-term vitality (Trinick et al., 2020). Prestige planning enhances language status through media representation, cultural industries, and public diplomacy. Soft power strategies employ language promotion for national brand building and international influence. Educational planning integrates language goals with standards, assessment, credentialing, teacher education, and instructional practice (Zheng & Luo, 2025).

Cross-pillar coordination mechanisms ensure that status, corpus, and acquisition planning reinforce rather than undermine each other. Sequencing and iteration prove essential as societal domains evolve and new communicative needs emerge. Multidimensional models recognize that sustainable language planning requires simultaneous attention to all planning types (Pinjani et al., 2024).

NATIONAL LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Pluralist ideologies recognize multiple languages as resources for participation, learning, and civic engagement. Policies supporting multilingual competence development provide curricular space for minority languages, assessment accommodations, and implementation flexibility. Implementation gaps between policy intent and practice remain persistent challenges, as declarative support for diversity encounters resource constraints and institutional resistance (Ngcobo et al., 2025).

Institutional accommodation models include territorial bilingualism arrangements and decentralized governance with language rights guarantees. Legal enforceability and institutional robustness determine whether pluralist commitments translate into meaningful protections (Zhang et al., 2023).

Assimilationist ideologies promote dominant language acquisition as a national integration strategy, employing official-language mandates and majority-language schooling. Deficit framings position linguistic diversity as a problem requiring remediation through standardization and homogenization. State capacity and social cohesion rationales justify assimilationist approaches, though evidence for their necessity remains contested (Labibah & Surakhmat, 2024).

Contemporary patterns in Central and Eastern Europe and post-Soviet states demonstrate the continued influence of assimilationist thinking. Tensions with minority language preservation generate conflict between assimilation imperatives and intergenerational transmission goals. Monoglossic preferences and funding constraints produce domain loss in schooling and public administration (Yudina et al., 2020).

Vernacularization involves revival and elaboration of indigenous languages through corpus development, status

enhancement, and acquisition planning. Postcolonial language policy decisions negotiate between vernaculars and ex-colonial languages, often producing hybrid regimes for interethnic communication (Tuuli & Maarjanen, 2024).

Challenges include resource constraints, teacher availability, legitimization in high-stakes domains, and competition from dominant and global languages. Successes depend on community involvement, sustained commitment, comprehensive approaches, and institutional support (Yadav, 2023).

English dominance in research, diplomacy, commerce, and higher education creates complex policy implications. English-medium instruction in tertiary education facilitates cross-border mobility and labor market signaling but potentially undermines local languages. Testing regimes and credentialing mechanisms function as gatekeeping devices that structure access to educational and economic opportunities (Sultana, 2025).

Dual-track and multi-track models attempt to balance global competitiveness with cultural continuity, while translanguaging pedagogies and rights-based guarantees provide alternative approaches to monolingual immersion (Muhammad Nur Iman & Nurasia Natsir, 2025).

Cultural preservation versus economic mobility generates family-level dilemmas as parental choice patterns respond to institutional incentives favoring dominant languages. Additive versus subtractive bilingualism outcomes depend critically on policy design and implementation (Latafat, 2025).

Nation-building versus minority rights produces constitutional tensions requiring decentralization, autonomy arrangements, and conflict reduction through toleration. Language ideology and power relations embed hierarchies through standards, assessment, and legitimization of authoritative speech. Transformative approaches emphasizing

inclusivity and plural participation offer alternatives to assimilationist frameworks (Joullié et al., 2021).

BILINGUAL/MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION MODELS

Additive bilingual education, particularly mother-tongue-based multilingual instruction, provides cognitive access and identity affirmation while developing proficiency in additional languages. Resource allocation and curriculum design challenges require careful attention to sequencing, materials development, and teacher preparation (Gersalia & Estremera, 2025).

Subtractive bilingual contexts pressure students toward dominant language proficiency, producing domain loss and heritage language attrition. Equity implications prove severe, as students lacking dominant language proficiency face credential access barriers (Reynolds, 2014).

Dual-medium and dual-language programs employ immersion models with varied language distribution ratios, producing strong biliteracy and subject-matter achievement outcomes. Maintenance versus transitional design distinctions determine whether programs aim for sustained bilingualism or replacement of heritage languages (Kimura & Fairbrother, 2023; Savski, 2023)

Heritage-language and community-based programs, including after-school and weekend instruction, require integration with formal schooling and sustained parental involvement. Translanguaging and plurilingual pedagogies strategically employ multilingual repertoires, value multilingual competence in assessment, and demand specialized teacher preparation (Buansari et al., 2025).

Cognitive and academic outcomes demonstrate biliteracy development, transfer effects, and long-term educational attainment advantages. Early literacy gains with mother-tongue

instruction facilitate transitions to additional language domains while supporting maintenance trajectories. Social and identity outcomes include strengthened belonging, intercultural competence, and equitable access to linguistic capital (Dennison J et al., 2025).

Linguistic pluralism frames multiple languages as collective resources that enhance participation, learning, and social justice when supported by mother-tongue–based multilingual education and institutional guarantees. Community-level research indicates, however, that monoglossic beliefs remain widespread and can constrain pluralist reforms unless addressed through public engagement and educator practice, highlighting the gap between normative pluralism and lived ideologies (Henderson, 2022).

LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION AND ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

Assessing language vitality requires examining speaker population demographics, domain reduction patterns, and intergenerational transmission indicators. The UNESCO Language Vitality and Endangerment framework has been widely adopted to evaluate these indicators, using a comprehensive nine-factor assessment that includes absolute numbers of speakers, proportion of speakers within the total population, and shifts in domains of language use. Recent research demonstrates that urban-rural divides, educational attainment levels, and economic development patterns significantly amplify language shift processes, with urbanization emerging as a potent predictor of intergenerational transmission disruption: globalization pressures, assimilationist policies, social discrimination, and limited institutional support endangerment. Higher average years of schooling have been associated with greater language endangerment globally,

providing evidence that formal education systems can inadvertently contribute to language diversity loss when not designed to support multilingual competence. Road density, which facilitates population mobility and contact with dominant language communities, also correlates strongly with increased language endangerment rates across diverse geographic contexts. Colonial language legacies and postcolonial hierarchies structure contemporary endangerment patterns. Postcolonial language policies have often failed to dismantle colonial-era linguistic inequalities, instead reinforcing social stratification through continued privileging of former colonial languages in education, administration, and economic domains (Rajkamal & Susanti, 2025).

Revitalization objectives encompass corpus planning for modern domains, status planning for prestige enhancement, and acquisition planning for learning and transmission. Community-led initiatives, including master-apprentice programs, language nests, and immersion centers, prove effective when culturally grounded. Institutional efforts through mother-tongue education, higher education programs, and public media platforms provide essential infrastructure (Sallabank, 2021).

Resource limitations, including personnel shortages, materials scarcity, and infrastructure gaps, constrain revitalization efforts. The lack of qualified language teachers represents a critical bottleneck, as endangered language communities struggle to recruit and retain educators with both linguistic competence and pedagogical training. Materials development challenges persist due to insufficient funding and expertise, leaving many programs without age-appropriate textbooks, digital resources, or multimedia learning tools essential for engaging younger learners. Furthermore, technological infrastructure deficits, including limited internet access, inadequate computer facilities, and the absence of

language-specific software, prevent communities from leveraging digital platforms that could expand revitalization reach and sustainability (Huzska et al., 2024).

Comprehensive, integrated approaches aligning education, administration, and community engagement with multi-level coordination prove most effective. Legitimization in high-stakes domains through examination inclusion, public service use, and media presence enhances vitality. Community engagement, ensuring speaker involvement, intergenerational transmission, and identity motivation, constitutes the foundation for sustainable revitalization. Comparative cases, including Māori, Welsh, and Hawaiian language programs, demonstrate that sustained commitment, institutional support, and community ownership enable revitalization success (N. Hornberger, 2020).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored the complexities and multidimensionality of language policy and planning (LPP) in multilingual societies, emphasizing how sociolinguistic perspectives and policy studies intertwine to shape language structure, status, acquisition, and use across public domains, education, and economic life. The evolution of LPP theory, from classical models of status, corpus, and acquisition planning to contemporary, ecologically informed frameworks, underscores the need for nuanced analysis that integrates macro-level policy, meso-level institutional practices, and micro-level community interactions. Such integration is essential for understanding both intended and unintended outcomes as societies strive to balance linguistic diversity with social cohesion and functional equity.

Language policy and planning have evolved from classical technical approaches emphasizing standardization and national language promotion toward critical perspectives interrogating power, inequality, and ideological dimensions. Interconnections

among policy ideologies, planning mechanisms, and implementation outcomes reveal that successful LPP requires alignment across multiple dimensions and levels. Persistent tensions between diversity and cohesion, identity and mobility, and local and global orientations demand sophisticated policy frameworks rejecting simple solutions.

Policy-practice gaps highlight the critical importance of ideological and implementational spaces where actors negotiate policy meanings. Multi-scalar coordination involving diverse actors—policymakers, institutional leaders, educators, families, and communities—determines implementation success. Equity, justice, and resource-oriented frameworks provide essential correctives to deficit-based and assimilationist approaches.

Integrating classical planning approaches with contemporary critical perspectives enables both technical competence and social justice orientation. Strengthening legal and institutional guarantees for minority languages through constitutional provisions, legislative frameworks, and enforcement mechanisms proves essential. Balancing global competitiveness with cultural and linguistic sustainability requires multi-track educational models, translanguaging pedagogies, and sustained resource commitments.

Crucially, the chapter highlights ideological tensions inherent in policy ideologies—ranging from pluralistic recognition and accommodation, to assimilationist approaches, vernacular restoration, and internationalist lingua-franca promotion. Policy outcomes are shaped by national and community ideologies, legal frameworks, and market forces, producing trade-offs among cultural preservation, national cohesion, minority rights, and global competitiveness. Sustainable LPP strategies must couple ideological reform with material support and implementational accountability, bridging

normative aspirations with equitable participation and plural legitimacy in public life.

Technological change and new communication ecologies create both opportunities and challenges for language maintenance and revitalization. Climate migration and demographic shifts will generate new multilingual contexts requiring adaptive policy responses: transnational language communities and diaspora engagement demand policy frameworks transcending territorial nation-state assumptions. As globalization intensifies, achieving sustainable multilingualism while ensuring linguistic justice for all communities remains the central challenge for language policy and planning in multilingual societies.

REFERENCES

Abdurrizal, M., Sumardi, S., & Putra, K. A. (2022). Teacher Agency in Multilingual Education Policy in an Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, *14*(3), 4343–4350. https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i3.1206

Arrona, A., & Zabala-Iturriagagoitia, J. M. (2019). On the study and practice of regional innovation policy: the potential of interpretive policy analysis. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, *32*(1), 148–163. https://doi.org/10.1080/13511610.2018.1528141

Buansari, I., Setiadi, S., & Mayuni, I. (2025). Revisiting the Application of Translanguaging Pedagogy in Bilingual Classrooms. *Proceeding of the International Seminar on Humanity, Education, and Language*, *1*(1), 657–672. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21009/ishel.v1i1.56902

Cooper, R. L. (1998). Language Planning and Social Change. *Issues in Apllied Linguistics*, *9*(1), 67–69. https://escholarship.org/content/qt2700r0k3/qt2700r0k3_no

Splash_ac0090456b457141855a3932196c42b1.pdf#page=1&zoom=auto,-187,319

Costa-Carreras, J. (2024). What corpus language planning is in place for public television outlets in the Catalan communicative space? *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *25*(3), 330–347. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2024.2306089

Cushing, I. (2020). The policy and policing of language in schools. *Language in Society*, *49*(3), 425–450. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404519000848

Dennison J, E., Rusnalasari, Z. D., Marselina, S., & Raflis. (2025). Language Ideologies and Policy Development: Navigating Identity, Education, and Globalization. *Lingua : Journal of Linguistics and Language*, *3*(1), 62–76. https://doi.org/10.61978/lingua.v3i1.1038

Duarte, M. (2024). Social Cohesion and the Struggle for Power in Diverse Societies. *Law, Ethics and Philosophy*, 75–96. https://doi.org/10.31009/LEAP.2024.V11.05

Gallo-Lozano, A. M. (2025). Invisible Educational Stakeholders in Language Planning and Policy. *Revista Arista Critica*, *4*, 67–81. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18041/2745-1453/rac.4.11714

Gersalia, A., & Estremera, M. (2025). A Systematic Literature Review of Bilingual Education Models: Approaches and Educational Outcomes. *International Journal of Language Teaching and Education*, *9*(2), 1–12. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22437/ijolte.v9i2.44428

Gobbo, F. (2023). Corpus at the Core: The Epistemology of Language Planning. In *Epistemological and Theoretical Foundations in Language Policy and Planning* (pp. 73–99). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-22315-0_4

Grin, F., Conceicao, M. C., Ozolina, Z., Pokorn, N. K., & Pym,

A. (Eds.). (2018). *The MIME Vademecum:Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe* (1st ed.). European Community. https://www.mime-project.org/resources/MIME_Vademecum.pdf#page=3&zoom=auto,-82,516

Henderson, K. (2022). Language Ideological Multiplicity and Tension within Dual Language Bilingual Education Teachers. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, *21*(2), 116–132. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2020.1791708

Hornberger, N. (2020). Things I've learned about Indigenous education and language revitalization. *ReVista: Harvard Review of Latin America*, *XIX*(2). https://revista.drclas.harvard.edu/things-ive-learned-about-indigenous-education-and-language-revitalization/

Hornberger, N. H. (2020). Reflect, Revisit, Reimagine: Ethnography of Language Policy and Planning. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *40*, 119–127. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026719052000001X

Hornberger, N. H., Tapia, A. A., Hanks, D. H., Dueñas, F. K., & Lee, S. (2018). Ethnography of language planning and policy. *Language Teaching*, *51*(2), 152–186. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444817000428

Hult, F. M., & Hornberger, N. (2016). Revisiting Orientations in Language Planning: Problem, Right, and Resource as an Analytical Heuristic. *The Bilingual Review*, *33*(3), 30–49. https://repository.upenn.edu/items/8b119699-f799-4f83-aad5-5e6ece21984f

Huzska, B., Stark, A., & Aini, I. (2024). Linguistic Sustainability: Challenges and Strategies of Preserving Minority and Indigenous Languages- the Case of Indonesia. *IJASS: International Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, *7*(6).

https://www.ijassjournal.com/2024/V7I6/41466639488.pdf
Irshad, S., Azim, U. W., & Azim, R. (2024). Implementing Hornberger's Biliteracy Continua Model in Pakistani Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities. *JALT: Journal of Applied Linguistics and TESOL*, *7*(4), 1530–1544.
Joullié, J.-E., Gould, A. M., Spillane, R., & Luc, S. (2021). The language of power and authority in leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *32*(4), 101491. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2020.101491
Ketchassop, A. C. T. (2020). Solving Linguistic Insecurity by an Application of the Haugen Model of Language Planning: The Case Study of the Nda'nda' Language in Cameroon. *AJHSSR: American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research*, *4*(9), 307–315. https://www.ajhssr.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/ZJ2049307315.pdf#page=1&zoom=auto,-82,848
Khider, M. (2024). *Language Planning and Language Policy* (pp. 1–7). University Biskra. https://elearning.univ-biskra.dz/moodle2024/pluginfile.php/765460/mod_resource/content/1/Language Planning and Policy.pdf#page=1&zoom=auto,-82,848
Kimura, G. C., & Fairbrother, L. (2023). *A Language Management Approach to Language Problems: Integrating Macro and Micro Dimensions* (1st ed.). EBSCO Publishing. https://www.asau.ru/files/pdf/2453394.pdf
Kotkov, G. (2021). *What are different models of bilingual education?* Multilingual Montessori. https://multilingualmontessori.org/what-are-different-models-of-bilingual-education/
Labibah, F., & Surakhmat, A. (2024). The Role of Language in Shaping National Identity: A Comparative Study of

Indonesia, Kazakhstan, and Monaco. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Literary Language*, *1*(1), 24–29. https://prosiding.aspirasi.or.id/index.php/ICOLLICS

Landini, I. (2025). Intercultural education and linguistic and cultural diversity: navigating the tension between policy and grassroots implementation in schools. *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1017/ics.2025.10055

Latafat, K. (2025). *Language policy and socioeconomic mobility: A comparative review of English education in developing countries*. UKFIET Learning Policymaking. https://www.ukfiet.org/2025/language-policy-and-socioeconomic-mobility-a-comparative-review-of-english-education-in-developing-countries/

Mokoena, T., De Smet, A., & Chenier, S. (2025). Language, Law, and Power: The Politics of Official Languages in Multilingual States. *Interdisciplinary Studies in Society, Law, and Politics*, *4*(1), 275–286. https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.isslp.4.1.27

Muhammad Nur Iman, & Nurasia Natsir. (2025). Translanguaging Pedagogies in Digital Learning Environments: Fostering Multilingual Competence Among Generation Z Learners. *Proceeding of The International Conference of Inovation, Science, Technology, Education, Children, and Health*, *5*(1), 57–74. https://doi.org/10.62951/icistech.v5i1.268

Ngcobo, S. J., Zhandire, T., Luvuno, Z. M., Chiya, W. H., Nxumalo, C. T., Mazibuko, G. B., Ncama, B. P., Duma, S. E., & Naidoo, D. (2025). Evaluating language policy implementation in South African higher education - three decades of progress and challenges: A scoping review protocol. *PLOS One*, *20*(4), e0322322. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0322322

Nirwana, Gunawan, W., & Muhlis. (2025). Understanding Raciolinguistic Dynamic in EFL Classroom: A Systematic Literature Review on Language and Identity in Global Educational Contexts. *JOALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature)*, *10*(1), 175–200. https://doi.org/10.33369/joall.v10i1.36951

Oliver, K., & Boaz, A. (2019). Transforming evidence for policy and practice: creating space for new conversations. *Palgrave Communications*, *5*(1), 60. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-019-0266-1

Pinjani, A., Naviwala, N., & Ali, M. (2024). *For Children to Learn, We Must Teach them in Languages they Understand*. The Citizen Foundation USA. https://www.tcfusa.org/mother-tongue-based-multilingual-education/

Rajkamal, D., & Susanti, A. (2025). Community, Education, and Technology in Language Revitalization: A Narrative Review. *Lingua : Journal of Linguistics and Language*, *3*(2), 77–88. https://doi.org/10.61978/lingua.v3i2.1039

Reynolds, P. T. (2014). Common Bilingual Education Program Models in the United States. *Matsuyama University Studies in Language and Literature*, *34*(1), 45–63. https://files.core.ac.uk/download/pdf/230499583.pdf#page=1&zoom=auto,-170,601

Sallabank, J. (2021). *Revitalizing Endangered Languages* (J. Olko & J. Sallabank (Eds.); 1st ed.). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108641142

Savski, K. (2023). Negotiating hegemonies in language policy: ideological synergies in media recontextualizations of audit culture. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *24*(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2021.2006945

Singh, M., Xiǎolí, L., Weinmann, M., Neilsen, R., & McGregor, J. (2025). Postmonolingual Research-Informed Education

Policy Practices: Multilingual Knowledge Dialogues for Democratic Values. In *The BERA-Sage Handbook of Research-Informed Education Practice and Policy*. SAGE Publications, Inc. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781036204679.n10

Sultana, J. (2025). *How English Language has Influenced Higher Education Systems Worldwide*. TOEFL Test Prep. https://toefltestprep.com/blog/how-english-language-has-influenced-higher-education-systems-worldwide

Tollefson, J. W., & Perez-Milans, M. (Eds.). (2018). *The Oxford Handbook of Language Policy and Planning* (1st ed.). Oxford University Press.

Trinick, T., May, S., & Lemon, R. (2020). *Language Planning and Policy: Factors that Impacts on Succesful Language Planning and Policy* (1; Literature Review).

Tuuli, T., & Maarjanen, J. (2024). Vernacularization: A Cross-Disciplinary Review. *Redescriptions: Political Thought,Conceptual History and Feminist Theory*, *27*(2), 122–142. https://doi.org/10.33134/rds.439

Yadav, A. K. (2023). Language Revitalization and Endangered Languages: Current Trends and Future Prospects. *Journal of Advanced Research in English and Education*, *8*(4), 28–33. https://www.thejournalshouse.com/index.php/Journal-English-Education/article/view/1013

Yudina, N. V., Melnichuk, M. V., & Seliverstova, O. A. (2020). Language Policy and Planning in Russia, China and the USA through the Lens of Mass Media of the 21-st Century. *JSSER: Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, *11*(3). https://jsser.org/index.php/jsser/article/view/2603

Zeeshan, M. (2023). Ruiz's (1984) language orientations: An analytical framework for understanding language orientations of macro-micro policy agents. *Kashmir Journal of Language Research*, *26*(1), 29–39.

Zhang, C., Zhao, R., & Huang, Y. (2023). The framework and features of language policies in global constitutional texts. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1064034

Zheng, X., & Luo, N. (2025). A Multidimensional Perspective on Language Planning and Policy in Singapore: Theory, Practice and Challenges. *Journal of Current Social Issues Studies*, *2*(5), 322–326. https://doi.org/10.71113/JCSIS.v2i5.296

AUTHOR'S PROFILE

Loso Judijanto

is a public policy researcher who works at the research institution IPOSS Jakarta. He was born in Magetan on January 19, 1971. He completed his Master of Statistics at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, in 1998 with the support of ADCOS (Australian Development Cooperation Scholarship) from the Government of Australia. He had completed his Master of Management Program at the University of Indonesia in 1995 with the support of *Bank Internasional Indonesia* Scholarship. His undergraduate studies were completed at the Bogor Agricultural University (IPB University) in Bogor, majoring in Statistics of the Faculty of Mathematics and Science in 1993 with the support of *KPS-Pertamina* Scholarship. The author had accomplished his elementary education up to high school in Maospati, Magetan. Along with his career, he has been assigned as a member of the Board of Commissioners or Supervisors and/or Audit Committee on various companies or institutions operating in various sectors such as seaport management, cellular telecommunications, banking, infrastructure financing, securities and brokerage, plantation, coal mining, property and recreation, and plantation fund management. The author has powerful interests in conducting research in the areas of public policy, economics, finance, human capital, and corporate governance.

CHAPTER 12
RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS

Ledy Nurlely
Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Serang
E-mail: ledy@untirta.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Research methods play a crucial role in sociolinguistics, as the discipline is fundamentally concerned with investigating the relationship between language and society through empirical evidence. Unlike purely theoretical approaches to language study, sociolinguistics relies heavily on systematically collected data to explain how language is shaped by social factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, social class, and context of use. Well-designed research methods ensure that sociolinguistic findings are reliable, valid, and representative of real language practices in speech communities.

The importance of research methods in sociolinguistics lies in their ability to capture language as it is actually used in everyday interactions. Sociolinguistic research often deals with variation, change, and diversity in language, which cannot be adequately understood without careful observation, data collection, and analysis. Through appropriate methodological choices, researchers can identify patterns of language variation, explain why certain linguistic forms are preferred in specific social contexts, and examine how language reflects and constructs social identities.

There is a close relationship between sociolinguistics, language variation, and research methodology. Language variation is a central focus of sociolinguistics, and its investigation requires methods that can account for both

linguistic and social variables. Quantitative methods, for example, allow researchers to measure the frequency of linguistic variants and correlate them with social factors, while qualitative methods provide in-depth insights into speakers' attitudes, identities, and communicative practices. The selection of methodology therefore directly influences how language variation is observed, interpreted, and explained.

RESEARCH PARADIGMS IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS

The most commonly used paradigms in sociolinguistics are quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches.

Quantitative Research

Quantitative research is characterized by the systematic coding of linguistic data and the application of statistical analyses to uncover patterns of language use. Lago (2023) emphasizes systematic coding as an effective strategy for managing large-scale datasets and for identifying recurring patterns across multiple lessons or tasks, thereby enabling empirical comparisons across diverse contexts, including classroom interactions. In addition, this research paradigm frequently incorporates participant surveys and structured questionnaires. For example, Makarova & Morozovskaia (2022) employed survey instruments to collect linguistic data from Russian-speaking immigrants in Canada, which were subsequently analyzed using quantitative techniques such as chi-square tests. Such quantitative approaches not only facilitate the identification of trends in language use but also support the operationalization of sociolinguistic variables, providing a robust foundation for broader generalizations about linguistic behavior within specific populations (Burnett et al., 2024).

Qualitative Research

In contrast to quantitative methodologies, qualitative research prioritizes analytical depth over numerical generalizability. By employing approaches such as discourse analysis and ethnography, qualitative methods seek to examine the complex ways in which language operates within specific social contexts. Wolontis (2022) advocates ethnographic approaches as particularly effective for capturing the fluid and emergent nature of identity construction in workplace settings, demonstrating how social interaction mediates the formation of personal and professional identities through language. Similarly, Jacobs & Valeiras (2024) emphasize narrative practices as a means of understanding language use from an emic perspective, foregrounding individuals' lived experiences and the nuanced dynamics of social interaction. Furthermore, Abdurashitova (2021) highlights the analytical value of discourse analysis in examining gender dynamics in media discourse, illustrating how qualitative inquiry can uncover subtle communicative patterns that may remain inaccessible to quantitative approaches. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that qualitative research offers rich, contextually grounded insights into the social functions of language.

Mixed-Methods Research

Mixed-methods research integrates quantitative and qualitative approaches, enabling the triangulation of findings and thereby enhancing the analytical depth of sociolinguistic inquiry. Makarova & Morozovskaia (2022) exemplify this approach by combining narrative analysis with quantitative survey data, a strategy that enriches their examination of immigrants' language practices. Such methodological convergence facilitates a holistic perspective, allowing researchers to investigate both the statistical distribution of

linguistic patterns and the qualitative complexities embedded in personal narratives. Moreover, scholars such as Burnett et al. (2024) increasingly advocate for mixed-methods designs that foreground the socially constructed nature of linguistic categories, arguing that the integration of qualitative and quantitative insights can yield more nuanced and theoretically robust interpretations of sociolinguistic variables. Through the deliberate combination of diverse methodological frameworks, mixed-methods research supports a comprehensive exploration of language as a dynamic and multifaceted component of social life.

RESEARCH DESIGN IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS STUDIES

Research design connects research questions, data collection methods, and analytical procedures, enabling researchers to produce valid and meaningful findings.

Formulating Research Questions And Objectives

The foundation of any sociolinguistic investigation rests upon the formulation of clearly articulated research questions and well-defined objectives. Thiga et al. (2024) argue that precise research objectives are essential to maintaining scientific rigor, as they inform methodological decisions and guide the analytical processes throughout the study. Within sociolinguistics, research questions frequently focus on how language practices vary across social groups or communicative contexts. The clarity of these questions shapes the overall research design, supports the appropriate selection of methodological approaches whether quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods and ensures that the study addresses salient sociolinguistic phenomena.

Selecting Research Sites And Speech Communities

The selection of appropriate research sites and speech communities is a critical component of sociolinguistic inquiry, as it directly influences the relevance and validity of the data collected. This process requires a nuanced understanding of the sociopolitical and cultural contexts of the research setting, as well as the linguistic profiles of the populations under investigation. To achieve such understanding, researchers often employ qualitative approaches, including ethnographic fieldwork and participant observation, which enable sustained engagement with speech communities and facilitate insight into the complex relationships between language use, identity, and social context.

Furthermore, collaboration with local communities and key stakeholders is essential, particularly when research involves marginalized or underrepresented groups. As emphasized by Ferris et al. (2021), community involvement not only enhances the ethical integrity of sociolinguistic research but also promotes the co-construction of knowledge. This collaborative orientation strengthens the depth and authenticity of the data collected and ensures that research outcomes more accurately reflect the multifaceted nature of language practices within the communities studied.

DATA TYPES AND SOURCES

The study of sociolinguistic phenomena relies on the systematic collection and analysis of diverse types of language data.

Spoken Language Data

Spoken language data provide access to the subtleties of real-time communication, offering valuable insights into conversational dynamics, prosodic features, and pragmatic

functions. Common methods for collecting spoken data include the recording of naturally occurring interactions as well as the use of semi-structured or structured interviews. For instance, in their investigation of language attitudes within specific communities, (Lestari et al., 2022) employed interviews and observational techniques to obtain authentic speech samples from adolescents, enabling a detailed examination of how linguistic variation emerges in informal, everyday conversation. Such first-hand spoken data are particularly valuable because they capture authentic language use, including features such as slang, colloquial expressions, and interactional strategies.

Moreover, research such as that conducted by Wagner (2023) demonstrates that spoken interactions among older adults also contribute significantly to our understanding of language variation and change. Through the use of mobile self-recording technologies, researchers are able to document spontaneous speech in naturalistic settings, thereby enriching sociolinguistic datasets and supporting more nuanced analyses of how language evolves within and across speech communities.

Written And Digital Language Data

Written and digital language data encompass a broad spectrum of materials, ranging from traditional print texts to contemporary forms of online communication, including social media interactions. Mardikantoro et al. (2023), for example, examined the use of Indonesian language varieties through an analysis of social media exchanges, demonstrating how digital communication reflects ongoing linguistic practices and patterns of variation within society. The depth and durability of written data enable researchers to trace language use across extended periods and diverse communicative contexts.

Furthermore, the adaptability of digital language data is evident in sociolinguistic studies such as those conducted by

Afdhaliyah & Haq (2021), which highlight the prevalence of informal language varieties on platforms such as Twitter. Their findings reveal a linguistic landscape that differs markedly from spoken interaction, shaped by platform-specific conventions and user communities. Written data derived from digital environments thus provides a valuable lens for examining how language evolves and adapts in response to the dynamics of online communication and the norms governing particular digital communities.

Naturally Occuring Vs Elicited Data

Sociolinguistic research commonly distinguishes between naturally occurring data and elicited data on the basis of their modes of collection and the contexts in which they are produced. Naturally occurring data emerge from spontaneous interactionssuch as everyday conversations, narratives, and other forms of unplanned discourse and thus offer crucial insights into the fluid and dynamic nature of language use. For example, Kusters & Lucas (2022) emphasize the importance of collecting sign language data in naturalistic settings, including the development and use of sign language corpora, in order to capture the sociolinguistic dynamics of sign languages. This approach enables researchers to observe authentic linguistic practices with minimal interference from experimental or researcher-imposed conditions.

By contrast, elicited data are produced through structured research techniques, including interviews, questionnaires, surveys, and targeted linguistic tasks designed to prompt specific responses from participants. Indarwati et al. (2024), for instance, adopted a mixed-methods design that integrated elicited responses with qualitative analysis to examine language attitudes toward Indonesian within the Konjo community. Although elicited data are valuable for exploring linguistic

knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions, it is important to acknowledge that such data may not fully reflect the fluidity of natural language use and may introduce certain forms of bias. Consequently, careful methodological consideration is required when interpreting findings derived from elicited data.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection in sociolinguistics relies on a toolkit of complementary methods that together enable robust descriptions of language use across communities, contexts, and modalities.

Sociolinguistic Interviews

Sociolinguistic interviews constitute a central methodological tool for documenting speakers' linguistic repertoires, attitudes, and patterns of language use within structured and semi-structured research designs. A prototypical interview protocol commonly includes demographic screening, a detailed language history, and targeted questions intended to elicit variation in language use across social domains (Henriques et al., 2022; Khachaturyan & Konoshenko, 2021; McNulty, 2023). Such protocols are designed to balance consistency across participants with sufficient flexibility to capture individual linguistic trajectories.

For example, in research on heritage Russian in Brazil, Henriques et al. (2022) implemented an interview protocol comprising a demographic questionnaire, a narrative component focused on language history, a Bilingual Language Profile, and a set of sociolinguistic questions adapted from established heritage language surveys. This combination of instruments was intended to elicit both stable linguistic features and context-sensitive variation, thereby facilitating quantitative analysis and systematic comparison across participants. The value of interview-based data is further reinforced by studies that

integrate interviews with ethnographic observation, allowing researchers to triangulate reported language beliefs with observed language practices, as demonstrated in sociolinguistic surveys conducted within diaspora communities (Khachaturyan & Konoshenko, 2021; Куцаева, 2023). Moreover, interview and ethnographic methodologies have been widely employed in minority-language contexts to explore issues of identity, language attitudes, and usage patterns, underscoring the interpretive strength of interviews when embedded within sustained, long-term fieldwork (McNulty, 2023).

Observation

Participant observation plays a crucial role in documenting interactional norms, turn-taking mechanisms, and discourse patterns that may not readily emerge from elicited tasks alone (Lamichhane & Lamichhane, 2024). The qualitative sociolinguistic literature consistently emphasizes that participant observation yields deeply contextualized insights into social groups and their language practices by situating researchers within the routines of everyday life over extended periods (Lamichhane & Lamichhane, 2024).

Within sociolinguistic corpus projects, ethnographic observation is frequently combined with interviews and elicitation techniques to anchor linguistic data in the social practices and interactional routines of the community under study (Khachaturyan & Konoshenko, 2021; Куцаева, 2023). This form of methodological triangulation enables researchers to distinguish variation attributable to social factors—such as interactional domain, gender, or age—from variation arising from individual idiolectal differences, thereby enhancing the sociolinguistic richness and analytical precision of corpus annotations (Khachaturyan & Konoshenko, 2021; Mobarki, 2021). Furthermore, the integration of participant observation

with interviews and surveys is evident in field-based studies of minority language communities, where ethnographic field notes, structured interviews, and sustained observation collectively illuminate language attitudes and patterns of use in naturally occurring contexts (McNulty, 2023; Куцаева, 2023).

Questionnaires And Surveys

Questionnaires and surveys are indispensable instruments for scalable and comparative data collection in sociolinguistic research, particularly for capturing attitudinal, perceptual, and self-reported dimensions of language use. Large-scale questionnaire deployment is a defining feature of many contemporary sociolinguistic corpus projects. Recent initiatives have reported the collection of extensive questionnaire datasets, in some cases comprising hundreds of thousands of responses, which enable broad analyses of linguistic variation and detailed demographic cross-tabulations (Entringer et al., 2021).

In applied research contexts, standardized instruments such as language profile inventories and ethnolinguistic surveys—are frequently combined with tailored questions designed to address specific research objectives and community contexts (Entringer et al., 2021; Henriques et al., 2022). The widespread use of questionnaires is evident across diverse sociolinguistic settings, including diaspora communities, where structured survey data play a foundational role in corpus construction and facilitate systematic comparisons across communities and populations (Entringer et al., 2021; Khachaturyan & Konoshenko, 2021). Even in smaller-scale studies, questionnaires remain essential for establishing participants' demographic backgrounds, language experiences, and self-reported proficiency levels, which can subsequently be correlated with observed language use in interviews, discourse tasks, or naturalistic data (МУСАЕВА, 2022).

At the same time, the sociolinguistic literature consistently emphasizes ethical and methodological considerations in survey design, including the need to ensure representativeness, clarity of items, and cultural sensitivity. Attention to these factors is particularly crucial in corpus-oriented research, where questionnaire data often serve as the backbone for sociolinguistic metadata and subsequent analytical interpretations (Nitti & Facchetti, 2021; МУСАЕВА, 2022).

Elicitation Tasks And Experiments

Experiments and elicitation tasks play a crucial role in sociolinguistic research by allowing researchers to control linguistic stimuli, investigate specific linguistic phenomenasuch as phonetic, morphosyntactic, or discourse-pragmatic features and elicit production data that may not arise spontaneously in interviews or through participant observation. Structured elicitation is therefore routinely employed as a complement to naturalistic data collection.

For instance, within a Russian–Brazilian heritage-language project, Henriques et al., (2022) implemented a Month-Ordering task alongside other working-memory and psycholinguistic measures to examine cognitive–linguistic interfaces. This approach demonstrates how experimental elicitation can be aligned with sociolinguistic objectives, revealing processing constraints in tandem with observable patterns of language production. In addition, elicitation tasks and targeted probes such as reading tasks or controlled intonation exercises—are often incorporated into broader data-collection protocols to elicit specific phonetic or prosodic configurations suitable for detailed acoustic analysis (Henriques et al., 2022).

Beyond formal experimental designs, targeted elicitation constitutes a standard component of corpus-building initiatives. Structured elicitation with small speaker networks is frequently

used to capture non-standard, low-frequency, or context-specific forms that are unlikely to be sufficiently represented in spontaneous discourse (Khachaturyan & Konoshenko, 2021). Finally, corpus-driven research in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) highlights the importance of elicitation-informed data in the development of domain-specific lexical and syntactic profiles, particularly through carefully designed collection, transcription, and annotation protocols (Hamdoun, 2024).

CORPUS-BASED AND DIGITAL DATA COLLECTION

The nuances of language use in social contexts necessitate a clear understanding of participants and sampling, speech communities and social networks, as well as social variables and sampling techniques.

Participants And Sampling

Participant identification and selection constitute a foundational stage in sociolinguistic research, as sampling strategies directly affect the reliability, representativeness, and generalizability of research findings. Wanjawa et al. (2023) underscore the importance of diverse participant representation in the Kencorpus project, which seeks to document linguistic variation across multiple Kenyan dialects. In this project, data collection was conducted in a range of social settings, including schools and community gatherings, reflecting a multimodal approach to participant recruitment that accommodates linguistic and social diversity.

In digitally mediated research contexts, online platforms have increasingly been employed as recruitment tools, enabling researchers to access broader and more heterogeneous populations beyond geographical constraints. Kominsky et al. 2021), for instance, highlight the effectiveness of online recruitment methods in facilitating access to diverse participant

samples, particularly within developmental research. Such approaches reduce barriers to participation and enhance the inclusivity of sociolinguistic studies that depend on digital modes of data collection, thereby expanding the scope and demographic reach of contemporary sociolinguistic inquiry.

Speech Community And Social Networks

An understanding of the dynamics of speech communities and social networks is essential for the accurate interpretation of sociolinguistic data. Speech communities are constituted through shared linguistic practices and patterns of social interaction, both of which exert a significant influence on linguistic variation and change. Opiyo et al. (2024), for example, examine social networks across diverse communities in South Sudan, demonstrating how local social dynamics can inform both data collection strategies and the interpretation of sociolinguistic phenomena.

In addition to geographically bounded communities, digital platforms have enabled the emergence of speech communities in online environments, where interactional norms and language practices are continually reshaped. The communicative dynamics observed in these digital spaces reflect evolving patterns of language use and social affiliation. As the prominence of online social networks continues to grow, sociolinguistic research has increasingly expanded to account for these novel forms of community. This shift is reflected in studies that integrate qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyze language use across diverse social networks, thereby capturing the complexity of linguistic practices in both offline and online contexts (Tempelaar et al., 2021).

Social Variables (Age, Gender, Class, Ethnicity, Education)

Social variables such as age, gender, social class, ethnicity, and educational background play a central role in shaping patterns of language use and must be systematically incorporated into sociolinguistic data collection designs. Demographic stratification, in particular, enables more fine-grained analyses of linguistic variation across social dimensions and supports robust comparative interpretation. (Wanjawa et al., 2023) illustrate the importance of attending to sociocultural variables in the construction of a multilingual dataset, demonstrating how careful consideration of social factors ensures that linguistic data accurately represent the communicative realities of Kenyan communities.

Sampling Techniques

The selection of sampling techniques plays a significant role in determining the effectiveness, validity, and interpretive scope of sociolinguistic research. Commonly employed strategies include stratified sampling, convenience sampling, and snowball sampling, each of which carries distinct methodological advantages and limitations. Hounslow et al. (2023), for example, employed snowball sampling in their survey on language assessment practices, illustrating how this approach can be particularly effective for accessing populations that are otherwise difficult to reach. By capitalizing on existing social networks, snowball sampling enables researchers to recruit participants whose experiences and perspectives may be underrepresented in more conventional sampling frames.

DATA TRANSCRIPTION, CODING, AND ANALYSIS

In sociolinguistic research, data transcription, coding, and analysis are crucial steps that allow researchers to make sense of complex linguistic data.

Transcription Methods And Conventions

Transcription serves as the foundational step in data analysis, converting spoken language into a written format. Different transcription methods apply varying conventions tailored to the research objectives. For conversational data, standard transcription conventions may include notation for pauses, intonation, and overlapping speech. Dart and Ahmed utilized intelligent verbatim transcription techniques to ensure accurate representation of spoken content in their qualitative inquiries (Dart & Ahmed, 2023). The fidelity of this transcription process is vital, as any errors in transcription can compromise the data's integrity and, consequently, the results of subsequent analysis.

Coding Linguistic And Social Variables

Once transcription is complete, the next step is coding the data. Coding involves categorizing linguistic features and social variables to facilitate analysis. In sociolinguistics, coding can reveal intricate patterns of language use across social dimensions such as age, gender, class, ethnicity, and education. For example, Yuan et al. emphasized the integration of qualitative codes with quantitative analysis to foster a comprehensive understanding of data (Yuan et al., 2025). Through indicative coding of variables, researchers can better understand how these dimensions intersect with linguistic patterns.

Quantitative Analysis (Variationist Analysis, Statistics)

Quantitative analysis in sociolinguistics often employs variationist analysis and statistical methods to identify patterns across large datasets. This methodological approach allows researchers to statistically analyze the relationships between language use and social factors. For instance, Sánchez et al.

explored the role of automatic gender detection through sociolinguistic modeling, offering insights into how language correlates with social variables (Sánchez et al., 2022). Statistical analysis is critical when working with large corpora, as it enables the derivation of generalizable conclusions about linguistic variation in diverse populations. Statistical packages such as SPSS are frequently employed for this purpose, allowing for advanced data manipulation and analysis, as illustrated by Teng et al. in their quantitative assessments of internship experiences (Teng et al., 2021). By integrating statistical analysis with qualitative insights, researchers can enhance the comprehensiveness of their findings.

Qualitative Analysis (Discourse And Interactional Analysis)

Qualitative analysis in sociolinguistics encompasses discourse and interactional analysis methods, focusing on how language constructs social meaning. Discourse analysis examines how context shapes language use, highlighting the significance of cultural narratives within conversations. Darling-Aduana and Hemingway emphasized a sequential mixed-method approach where initial qualitative analysis informed subsequent quantitative findings, illustrating the interdependence of qualitative and quantitative insights (Darling-Aduana & Hemingway, 2022).

Interactional analysis delves into the dynamics of face-to-face communication, assessing turn-taking, interruptions, and other interaction strategies. This method is essential for understanding how social hierarchies and power dynamics manifest in spoken exchanges. As shown by Martin and Rahilly, discourse analysis can unearth themes related to socio-political frameworks within spoken and written communications (Martin & Rahilly, 2023).

Use Of Software Tools

The use of software tools has revolutionized data collection and analysis in sociolinguistics. Applications like NVivo and Atlas.ti facilitate the organization, coding, and interpretation of qualitative data. For example, Dart and Ahmed synthesized their data using NVivo, enabling systematic coding and thematic extraction from transcribed interviews (Dart & Ahmed, 2023). Such tools offer functionalities that streamline workflow and enhance the reliability of qualitative analysis.

In addition to qualitative software, tools for quantitative analysis enable researchers to perform statistical analyses and visualizations. For instance, the use of mixed-method approaches can integrate outputs from different software, thereby supporting comprehensive analyses of sociolinguistic variables (Yuan et al., 2025). As technologies evolve, the incorporation of computational tools continues to shape dynamic methodologies in sociolinguistic research.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated that research methods constitute the methodological backbone of sociolinguistics, enabling systematic and empirically grounded investigations of the complex relationship between language and society. By outlining quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods paradigms, the discussion has shown how different methodological approaches offer complementary perspectives on language variation, use, and change. Careful research design—beginning with clearly formulated research questions and objectives, followed by the thoughtful selection of research sites, speech communities, data types, and collection methods—ensures that sociolinguistic studies are both scientifically rigorous and socially meaningful. Attention to ethical considerations, participant representation, and sampling

strategies further strengthens the validity and integrity of sociolinguistic research, allowing findings to accurately reflect real-world language practices

Moreover, the chapter highlights the importance of integrating diverse data sources and analytical techniques, ranging from spoken, written, and digital language data to corpus-based and experimental approaches. The combined use of interviews, observation, questionnaires, elicitation tasks, and advanced analytical tools enables researchers to capture language as a dynamic social phenomenon shaped by multiple interacting variables. As sociolinguistic contexts continue to evolve—particularly with the expansion of digital communication and online speech communities—methodological flexibility and reflexivity become increasingly essential. Ultimately, robust and context-sensitive research methods allow sociolinguistics to contribute nuanced insights into how language both reflects and constructs social life, reinforcing its relevance across academic, educational, and societal domains.

REFERENCES

Abdurashitova, E. (2021). Sociolinguistics Gender Discourse Analysis in Media. *Foreign Languages in Uzbekistan*, 62–73. https://doi.org/10.36078/1633678058

Afdhaliyah, R., & Haq, S. C. (2021). Variasi Bahasa Dalam Media Sosial Twitter. *Ghancaran Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, *3*(1), 104–116. https://doi.org/10.19105/ghancaran.v3i1.4732

Burnett, H., Abbou, J., & Thiberge, G. (2024). Analyzing Linguistic Variation Using Discursive Worlds. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *28*(4), 40–63. https://doi.org/10.1111/josl.12672

Darling-Aduana, J., & Hemingway, K. (2022). Representation Is Not Enough: Teacher Identity and Discretion in an Asynchronous, Scripted Online Learning Environment. *Teachers College Record*, *124*(9), 91–121. https://doi.org/10.1177/01614681221132384

Dart, M., & Ahmed, M. (2023). Evaluating Staff Attitudes, Intentions, and Behaviors Related to Cyber Security in Large Australian Health Care Environments: Mixed Methods Study. *Jmir Human Factors*, *10*, e48220. https://doi.org/10.2196/48220

Entringer, N., Gilles, P., Alegre, S. M., & Purschke, C. (2021). Schnëssen. Surveying Language Dynamics in Luxembourgish With a Mobile Research App. *Linguistics Vanguard*, *7*(s1). https://doi.org/10.1515/lingvan-2019-0031

Ferris, S., Lebovitch, A., & Allard, D. (2021). Sex Work Research, Ethics Review Processes, and Institutional Challenges for "Sensitive" Collaborative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *20*. https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069211033437

Hamdoun, W. M. (2024). Building ESP Corpus-Driven Specialized Words in Vocational Education in Saudi Arabia. *British Journal of Multidisciplinary and Advanced Studies*, *5*(4), 12–43. https://doi.org/10.37745/bjmas.2022.04151

Henriques, A. S., Skorobogatova, A. S., Kachkovskaia, T., Skrelin, P., Ruseishvili, S., Madureira, S., & Sekerina, I. A. (2022). Braporus, Spoken Corpus of Heritage Russian in Brazil. *Cadernos De Linguística*, *3*(1), e629. https://doi.org/10.25189/2675-4916.2022.v3.n1.id629

Hounslow, R., Rohde, A., & Finch, E. (2023). What Is the Usage of the Brisbane Evidence Based Language Test in Clinical Practice?: A Speech Language Therapy Survey. *International Journal of Language & Communication*

Disorders, *58*(4), 1113–1132. https://doi.org/10.1111/1460-6984.12847

Indarwati, I., Nurhayati, N., Lukman, L., & Sahib, H. (2024). Language Attitudes of the Konjo Community Toward the Indonesian Language: A Sociolinguistics Study. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, *5*(3). https://doi.org/10.59400/fls.v5i3.1613

Jacobs, G., & Valeiras, J. (2024). Whose Questions? Ventriloquation in Entrepreneurial Podcasts. *Discourse Studies*, *26*(6), 756–777. https://doi.org/10.1177/14614456241241157

Khachaturyan, M., & Konoshenko, M. (2021). Assessing (A)symmetry in Multilingualism: The Case of Mano and Kpelle in Guinea. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *25*(4), 979–998. https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069211023142

Kominsky, J. F., Begus, K., Bass, I., Colantonio, J., Leonard, J., Mackey, A. P., & Bonawitz, E. (2021). Organizing the Methodological Toolbox: Lessons Learned From Implementing Developmental Methods Online. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.702710

Kusters, A., & Lucas, C. (2022). Emergence and Evolutions: Introducing Sign Language Sociolinguistics. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *26*(1), 84–98. https://doi.org/10.1111/josl.12522

Lago, L. G. (2023). On Methodology and Methods for Analysing Classroom Discursive Interaction: A Discussion Between Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches. *Educação Em Revista*, *39*. https://doi.org/10.1590/0102-469841747t

Lestari, O. W., Jazeri, M., & Mukhlas, M. (2022). Analysis of the Use of Slang Variation by Teenagers in Selokajang Village: A Sociolinguistics Study. *Ghancaran Jurnal*

Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia, *4*(1), 105–120. https://doi.org/10.19105/ghancaran.v4i1.5856

Makarova, V., & Morozovskaia, U. (2022). The Linguistic Odyssey of Russian-Speaking Immigrants in Canada. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *27*(6), 885–907. https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069221129537

Mardikantoro, H. B., Siroj, M. B., Utami, E. S., & Kurniati, E. (2023). Investigating Indonesian Language Varieties in Social Media Interactions: Implications to Teaching Practices. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *13*(2), 306–316. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v13i2.63069

Martin, K., & Rahilly, E. (2023). Value Frames in Discourse Supporting Transgender Athlete Bans. *Discourse & Society*, *34*(6), 732–751. https://doi.org/10.1177/09579265231187058

McNulty, E. (2023). Manx Speakers, Language, and Identity. *Studia Celtica Posnaniensia*, *8*, 1–24. https://doi.org/10.14746/scp.2023.8.1

Nitti, P., & Facchetti, G. (2021). The Perception of Languages by Italian Native Speakers. *Glottodidactica an International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *48*(1), 63–80. https://doi.org/10.14746/gl.2021.48.1.04

Opiyo, K. O., Iteyo, C., & Onkware, K. (2024). The Nature of the United Nations Peace Mission in South Sudan. *African Journal of Empirical Research*, *5*(2), 710–724. https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.5.2.62

Sánchez, D. M., Moreno, A., & Jiménez-López, M. D. (2022). A White-Box Sociolinguistic Model for Gender Detection. *Applied Sciences*, *12*(5), 2676. https://doi.org/10.3390/app12052676

Tempelaar, W., Barwick, M., Crawford, A., Voineskos, A. N., Addington, D., Addington, J., Alexander, T., Baluyut, C., Bromley, S., Durbin, J., Foussias, G., Ford, C., Freitas, L.

d., Jindani, S., Kirvan, A., Kurdyak, P., Pauly, K., Polillo, A., Roby, R., … Kozloff, N. (2021). Adapting Evidence-Based Early Psychosis Intervention Services for Virtual Delivery: Protocol for a Pragmatic Mixed Methods Implementation and Evaluation Study. *Jmir Research Protocols*, *10*(12), e34591. https://doi.org/10.2196/34591

Teng, C. W. C., Lim, R. B. T., Chow, D., Narayanasamy, S., Liow, C. H., & Lee, J. J. (2021). Internships Before and During COVID-19: Experiences and Perceptions of Undergraduate Interns and Supervisors. *Higher Education Skills and Work-Based Learning*, *12*(3), 459–474. https://doi.org/10.1108/heswbl-05-2021-0104

Thiga, M., Kimeto, P., & Walekhwa, M. (2024). An Integrated Framework for Scientific and Ethical Review of Research Proposals. *Jraw*, *1*(2), 35–54. https://doi.org/10.58721/jraw.v1i2.804

Wagner, S. E. (2023). Including Older Adults in Variationist Sociolinguistics via Mobile Self-Recording. *Journal of Language and Aging Research*, *1*(1), 23–26. https://doi.org/10.15460/jlar.2023.1.1.1241

Wanjawa, B., Wanzare, L., Indede, F., McOnyango, O., Ombui, E., & Muchemi, L. (2023). Kencorpus: A Kenyan Language Corpus of Swahili, Dholuo and Luhya for Natural Language Processing Tasks. *Journal for Language Technology and Computational Linguistics*, *36*(2), 1–27. https://doi.org/10.21248/jlcl.36.2023.243

Wolontis, F. (2022). An Ethnographic Approach to the School-to-Work Transition: Constructing Identities in the Workplace. *American Journal of Qualitative Research*, *6*(3), 251–268. https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/12626

Yuan, X., Ye, P., Liu, X., Hu, Y., Xu, Q., Zhao, W., & Li, K. (2025). Usability Evaluation of a Virtual Reality Multisensory Sham-Feeding Device for Patients

Undergoing Fasting Periods for Colorectal Cancer Surgery: Mixed Methods Study. *Jmir Serious Games*, *13*, e75641. https://doi.org/10.2196/75641

Куцаева, М. В. (2023). “The Song Helps Us to Build and to Live”: The Role and Functions of the Ethnic Song in Moscow Chuvash and Mari Diasporic Groups. *Ethnic Culture*, *5*(4), 40–48. https://doi.org/10.31483/r-107989

МУСАЕВА, Ф. (2022). The Importance of Questionnaires in Corpus Building Process. *Foreign Languages in Uzbekistan*, 39–46. https://doi.org/10.36078/1652596712

AUTHOR'S PROFILE

Ledy Nurlely, M.Pd

Since childhood, the author has had a habit of reading. A variety of reading materials, ranging from fiction such as folk tales to those related to general knowledge, have always been of interest to the author. The author pursued a Bachelor's degree in English Education at the University of Lampung in 1995. Five years later, in 2000, the author completed the undergraduate program. In 2010, the author continued their education at the Master's level at the State University of Jakarta. After two years, in July 2012, the author completed their studies and earned a Master's degree in English Language Education. As an academic, the author has written various studies, both independently and in collaboration, and as part of a team, particularly related to their background in English Education. Some of these include studies on pure and applied linguistics, such as the use of picture sequences, the pictionary game, challenges in students' perspectives on English teaching, critical reviews on English skill development, designing ESP syllabi for editing courses, revitalizing the importance of language assessment literacy, and evaluating project-based course programs in learning planning courses. Currently, the author is actively teaching at Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University in Banten, in the English Education Department.

CHAPTER 13
DIGITAL LANGUAGE VARIATION

Nurhayati S.
Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika, Jakarta
E-mail: nurhayati.nhi@bsi.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) refers to human communication conducted through digital and internet-based technologies, enabling individuals to maintain social connections and engage in leisure activities, especially during restrictions like those imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic (Meier, 2021). According to Baron (2008), CMC is a practice of casually constructed communication in which linguistic norms are actively negotiated by users across various contexts and platforms. Meanwhile, Crystal (2011) describes CMC as a hybrid linguistic mode that combines features of spoken and written language.

Based on this conceptualization, the emergence of digital communication, primarily represented by CMC, marks one of the most profound and rapid changes in the history of human linguistics (Baron, 2010). The ubiquity of the internet, mobile devices, and social media platforms has not merely provided new channels for communication. Still, it has fundamentally reshaped the structure, norms, and pace of language evolution.

Digital communication has collapsed the traditional, sharp distinction between speech (oral, informal, spontaneous) and writing (literate, formal, planned). CMC often results in a "hybrid register," a form of "written speech" or "web speech" that is written but exhibits the informality, speed, and real-time interactional qualities of spoken language (Herring, 2005). In

accordance with the views expressed in Computer-Mediated Communication, language practices in CMC often cannot be strictly classified as speech or writing because they combine characteristics of both in a single form of communication (Thurlow et al., 2004).

This linguistic phenomenon is not isolated, but rather part of a broader trend known as the blurring, a historical process in which social and cultural boundaries have become increasingly fluid due to technological developments. In line with the views of archaeologist Charles Cobb cited in Jordan (2009), human societies have long been shaped by the flow of people, ideas, and technology, resulting in hybrid, non-rigid social entities. Within this framework, CMC can be understood as a contemporary manifestation of this historical pattern, in which technology acts as a catalyst that accelerates the blurring of boundaries between spoken and written modes of communication.

The unique design features (affordances) of digital platforms drive specific linguistic innovations, often prioritizing speed, brevity, and efficiency (Crystal, 2006), cited in (Tagg, 2020). In this way, the development of digital technology has created new conditions for communication that directly influence linguistic practices in Computer-Mediated Communication. The design and features of digital platforms provide affordances that shape how language is produced and used in online interactions. Internet-based communication relies on material limitations, such as keyboards and screens, which encourage users to adapt their linguistic practices to be faster, more concise, and more efficient in accordance with the demands of digital media (Crystal, 2006). Graham Ranger's overview of Crystal's work also confirms that online language innovation arises when users actively explore the

communicative potential provided by technology, rather than as a deterministic result of the technology itself (Ranger, 2007).

The technological affordances encourage a tendency toward language shortening and simplification, especially in synchronous interactions that demand quick and concise responses. In addition, the absence of prosodic and nonverbal cues in text-based communication conveys attitude and emotional meaning. Crystal asserts that this strategy has developed to avoid ambiguity when written language is used to fulfill the functions of spoken communication, so that online linguistic practices increasingly display characteristics that combine spoken and written language (Crystal, 2006), as discussed in (Ranger, 2007)).

Character limits (like those historically on Twitter) lead to the production of acronyms (*LOL, IMHO*) and non-standard spellings (Baron, 2008). This occurred because users sought to save time and space while still expressing their thoughts clearly (Sharapanovska, 2024). The abbreviated forms also make online communication faster and more casual, helping people sound friendly and connected (Svider, 2025). In many online communities, the use of abbreviations and simplified spelling has even become a shared style that conveys a sense of togetherness, familiarity, and creativity (Zappavigna, 2012). This is called *brevity and simplification.*

Multimodality enables online users to make text-based messages more expressive, creative, and socially meaningful. (Tolins & Samermit, 2016; Vohidova, 2025). Digital spaces require users to compensate for the absence of non-verbal cues. This need is fulfilled by *emojis, emoticons, GIFs, and memes*, allowing users to convey complex emotional, ironic, or contextual meaning instantly (Danesi, 2017). Researchers such as Alnuzaili et al. (2024) also explain that emojis can even

replace voice intonation in conversations, conveying mood and intent.

DEFINING DIGITAL LANGUAGE VARIATION

Digital language variation is best understood through foundational concepts describing the medium, the field of study, and the resulting linguistic product.

1. **Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)**
   Any communicative transaction via networked devices, including email, instant messaging, forums, and social media (Herring, 2005). CMC serves as both a technical means of delivering messages and a communication environment that reshapes interaction patterns, including turn-taking, temporal dimensions, and audience orientation. These conditions open up space for the emergence of new linguistic practices.
2. **Digital Sociolinguistics**
   It refers to a field of study that examines how language is used, varied, and changed in digital communication environments. (Androutsopoulos, 2015) emphasizes that this study focuses on dynamic social processes, such as meaning negotiation, identity formation, and language style selection in online interactions. This makes digital language variation not a deviation from standard norms but rather a strategic practice that reflects users' social needs. This perspective aligns with Tagg (2020), who states that the digital context creates new patterns of participation that directly influence everyday language practice
3. **Nettalk / Webspeak**
   The collective term for the linguistic output—the "product"—of CMC, marked by efficiency and an oralized style (Baron, 2010; Crystal, 2006). Webtalk is a language practice that emphasizes efficiency and economy of

language, in line with the demands of speed and space limitations in digital media, which are influenced by the spontaneity and interactivity typical of conversation. In this way, Nettalk or Webspeak reflects users' creativity in responding to technological affordances, rather than a decline in language quality.

CONCEPTS IN DIGITAL SOCIOLINGUISTICS

Digital Sociolinguistics is rooted in *CMC research*, recognizing digital writing as a hybrid register. This collapse of the speech/writing dichotomy accounts for features such as prosodic signaling (e.g., soooo) and the adoption of spoken slang in writing (Baron, 2008; Crystal, 2006). As stated by Androutsopoulos (2006), digital writing has now become a social practice in which users creatively adapt language to suit the speed and expressiveness of online interactions.

Another concept is *affordance theory*, borrowing from ecological psychology,emphasizes the action possibilities offered by a platform (Androutsopoulos, 2015). In other words, each digital platform shapes how people communicate and express themselves, given its features and limitations.

a. *Twitter/X,* which affords brevity due to character limits, encourages users to write short, creative, and expressive messages.
b. *WhatsApp, which* supplies intimacy and code-switching (Tagg, 2020), allows users to communicate privately and mix languages to show closeness.
c. *TikTok* provides reactionary, multimodal responses, showing how users can combine video, sound, and text to express emotions and creativity.

Digital sociolinguistics is created from *A Community of Practice (CoP)* that is formed when users interact regularly and

share linguistic norms that make them unique (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In an online context, these communities emerge around platforms, interests, or identities. It shows that online language is not only a means of communication but also a means of fostering a sense of community, differentiation, and the formation of social meaning.

Linguistic choices—from emojis to gaming jargon—are mechanisms by which individuals construct online identities (Page, 2013). Digital communities constitute a CoP that develops shared linguistic norms to maintain cohesion and exclude outsiders (Tagg, 2020). These shared norms function as a "digital dialect," fostering intimacy and collective identity even across global boundaries.

Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) facilitates unprecedented cross-lingual mixing globally. *Digital Code-Switching* (e.g., mixing local languages with English tech terms) is driven by efficiency and the need to address broader audiences (Androutsopoulos, 2019).In this context, code-switching functions both as a communication shortcut and as a symbolic act of identity negotiation, whereby users position themselves within a global digital culture while maintaining their local linguistic identity.

TRADITIONAL VS. DIGITAL LANGUAGE VARIATION

The study of language variation has shifted from stable social structures to dynamic, technology-driven contexts.

Table 13.1. Comparative Analysis

Feature	Traditional Variation	Digital Variation
Source	Geography/Social Class	Context and Platform Affordances
Norms	Standardized/Hierarchical	Fluid and locally negotiated

Feature	Traditional Variation	Digital Variation
Diffusion	Slow/Contiguous areas	Rapid/Globally immediate
Mode	Primarily Oral	Hybrid Register (Multi-modal)
Stability	Generally stable	Highly dynamic/Chronolectic

In traditional sociolinguistics, variation is primarily driven by geographical isolation and social stratification (class, gender, ethnicity). (Labov, 2006) established that linguistic variables are often tied to physical communities and socioeconomic status. In contrast, variation online is driven by Platform Affordances—the technical properties of a site (e.g., character limits on X/Twitter or the visual focus of Instagram). Users adapt their language based on the context of the digital space rather than their physical location.

Then, traditional norms are often hierarchical, enforced by institutions like schools and dictionaries. Standard language ideology assumes a "correct" version of language that resists change, while online norms are locally negotiated within specific "Communities of Practice". For example, a gaming community may develop its own lexical norms (e.g., "poggers," "noob") that are fluid and highly sensitive to the group's social needs.

Another difference is about diffusion; the speed at which new words spread has changed fundamentally. Traditionally, the Wave Model (Schmidt, 1872) suggests that language change spreads slowly from a central point to neighboring areas. However, digitally, diffusion is viral and global, driven by "weak ties" across social networks. A meme or slang term can reach millions of users globally in hours, bypassing geographical boundaries entirely.

Talking about mode, digital communication has blurred the lines between speaking and writing. Historically, linguists distinguished between formal writing and informal oral speech, whereas digital language is a hybrid register—often described as "typed speech". Multimodal is created not just through words, but through the integration of emojis, GIFs, hashtags, and images.

The last difference is about stability. Language change usually takes generations to become permanent traditionally. On the other hand, online variation is chronolectic, meaning it is tied to specific points in time and has a very short life cycle. Slang can emerge, reach peak popularity, and become "cringe" or obsolete within months.

Labov's (2006) Work established variation within physical communities. In contrast, modern research (Androutsopoulos, 2015) shows that the dominant variation online is explained less by "who you are" and more by "where you are" (platform-wise).

KEY CMC THEORIES

Having established how digital sociolinguistics conceptualizes language variation and how platform affordances reshape linguistic behavior, the discussion now turns to the theoretical foundations that explain why such variation emerges in computer-mediated environments. While the previous sections described *what* digital language variation looks like and *where* it occurs, this section focuses on *why* users adapt their language in specific ways. Key theories from communication studies provide a framework for understanding how technological environments, social interaction, and algorithmic mediation shape linguistic practices in CMC.

1. Media Richness Theory (MRT)

   Daft and Lengel (1986) propose that media richness is defined by immediate feedback and multiple cues. Text-

only CMC was initially considered "lean”. This spur of innovation led to the reintroduction of emoticons and emojis to convey "missing" human cues (Crystal, 2006). Recent research has updated Media Richness Theory to describe how algorithms now shape online communication. Bainotti & Peeters (2025) described TikTok's “multimodal richness,” where audio, video, and algorithmic curation collectively influence meaning formation. Similarly, Makinde et al. (2025) highlight that algorithms determine which modes of expression gain visibility, thereby altering what is considered rich communication. Cușnir (2025) adds that TikTok's design transforms media richness into a dynamic interaction between users and machines. In essence, this perspective suggests that richness is now socio-algorithmic rather than merely technological.

2. Social Presence Theory (SPT)

Short et al. (1976) defined Social Presence as the feeling of being personally connected. High social presence (video calls) encourages politeness, while low social presence (anonymous forums) may lead to flaming or aggressive non-standard language (Herring, 2005; Tagg, 2020). In the current digital space, social presence is built through multimodal signals that resemble intimacy. (Bazarova & Choi, 2014) note that users express social presence by combining responsiveness, personal disclosure, and visual cues such as emojis or reactions. This helps maintain a sense of warmth and authenticity even in asynchronous or text-based exchanges, showing that social presence now depends not only on the channel itself but also on how creatively users leverage its capabilities to convey emotional closeness.

MECHANISMS OF DIGITAL VARIATION

The theoretical perspectives above explain the communicative conditions that encourage linguistic adaptation in digital spaces. Building on these theories, it becomes necessary to examine the concrete processes through which digital language variation actually develops in everyday online interaction. This section, therefore, shifts from theoretical explanations to the practical mechanisms that drive linguistic change in CMC, highlighting how technological constraints and communicative needs directly influence users' linguistic choices.

1. Speed and Efficiency

   The pressure for real-time interaction creates a "Cognitive Economy." Users adopt condensation (acronyms like *BRB*, *LOL*) to maximize density while minimizing effort (Baron, 2008; Crystal, 2006).

2. Space and Character Limitations

   Physical constraints (e.g., the 140/280-character limit) force compression. This has led to a unique rhetorical style that persists even after limits are removed (Thurlow & Mroczek, 2011)

3. Multimodality and Expressiveness

   Digital spaces allow for the simultaneous transmission of text and image. Paralinguistic Digital Communication (PDC) involves using visual elements to reintroduce tone and emotion (Danesi, 2017; Tagg, 2020).

PRINCIPAL FORMS OF DIGITAL LANGUAGE VARIATION

The variation in digital language is evident at various linguistic levels. The following categories describe how users adapt language in online spaces through lexical, orthographic, and syntactic changes:

1. Lexical and Semantic Variation
   a. Neologisms: *meme, selfie, ghosting, doomscrolling*. The neologisms show how users creatively adapt language to describe new digital experiences (Szymańska, 2025). TikTok, as an example, encourages word innovation as users combine language, culture, and audiovisual expressions (Hidayati et al., 2026).
   b. Specialization: words like *thread* or *tag* take on platform-specific meanings. (Page, 2013) explains that such platform terms have evolved into unique narrative and social practices, becoming part of the formation of users' online identities.
2. Orthographic and Graphemic Variation
   a. Non-Standard Spelling: Omission of final periods to signal sincerity (Tagg, 2020).
   b. Prosodic Signaling: Visual elongation (*nooooo*) and capitalization for shouting (Crystal, 2006).
3. Syntactic and Discourse Variation
   a. Simplification: Truncated sentences and article omission (*Leaving now*), reflecting the speed and informality of digital talk.
   b. Intertextuality: The use of soundbites or memes as full conversational turns. (Milner, 2018) states that memes function as a form of participatory discourse, allowing people to modify existing cultural material to express identity, humor, and social harmony within online communities.

PLATFORM AND COMMUNITY CASE STUDIES (EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS)

Different platforms provide distinct communicative affordances, audiences, and interactional norms that shape how variation is realized in practice. Therefore, this section presents

platform- and community-based case studies to illustrate how digital language variation operates in real-world contexts, demonstrating how users adapt their linguistic choices to the expectations and constraints of particular online spaces.

1. Messaging Apps: WhatsApp and Telegram
   These platforms facilitate "Oralized Style." Variation is marked by high code-switching and the use of stickers to replace text (Androutsopoulos, 2019; Danesi, 2017). According to Tagg & Seargeant (2014), WhatsApp conversations are “dialogic writing,” which combines written text with the spontaneity of spoken conversation.
2. Microblogging: Twitter/X
   Tweets exhibit a condensed rhetoric. The hashtag serves as a metadata tool and a stylistic marker for sarcasm or irony (Thurlow & Mroczek, 2011).
3. Short-Form Video: TikTok and "Algospeak"
   TikTok presents a unique intersection of audio and visual variation. Algospeak is a specialized sociolect designed to bypass content moderation (e.g., *unalive* for *suicide*). This represents variation where the audience is the platform algorithm itself (Tagg, 2020).
4. Online Gaming and Streaming
   Gaming communities act as dense CoPs. Jargon (*AFK, GG, noob*) and custom platform emotes (Twitch's *PogChamp*) function as compressed conversational turns (Androutsopoulos, 2015).

SOCIOLINGUISTIC AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

After exploring the mechanisms and forms of digital language variation across platforms and communities, the discussion now moves beyond description toward broader sociolinguistic consequences. Digital linguistic practices do not exist in isolation; they influence identity formation, educational

perspectives on language standards, and even social power relations. This final section, therefore, examines the wider social implications of digital language variation and considers how these evolving practices reshape communication, literacy, and participation in contemporary society.

1. Identity and Affiliation
   Language variation is a tool for constructing digital personas.[16] Specific jargon usage signals in-group belonging and can be used to perform "authenticity" within a subculture (Page, 2013; Tagg, 2020).
2. Shifting Language Standards
   The rise of "Nettalk" creates tension in education. The "Language Anxiety" among educators stems from the fear that non-standard digital forms undermine formal literacy (Baron, 2008). However, scholars like Crystal (2006) argue that digital variation actually expands a user's linguistic repertoire.
3. Linguistics and Power: The Digital Divide
   Fluency in digital dialects acts as Linguistic Capital. Those who cannot navigate platform-specific jargon or Algospeak face exclusion, potentially intensifying the social divide (Androutsopoulos, 2015).
4. Polarization and Disinformation
   Specific lexical variations (partisan slang) are weaponized in political discourse to solidify "Echo Chambers." Emotionalized syntax and inflammatory emojis are used to generate rapid collective mobilization (Page, 2013; Tagg, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Digital language variation, primarily manifesting through Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), represents one of the most significant and rapid shifts in human linguistic history.

By collapsing the traditional distinctions between oral speech and formal writing, digital communication has birthed a "hybrid register" or "written speech" that combines the informality and real-time interaction of spoken language with the textual format of writing. Far from being a decline in language quality, these practices are recognized as strategic and creative responses to the unique communicative environments of the internet.

The evolution of this linguistic mode is fundamentally driven by technological affordances and social dynamics. Material limitations, such as keyboard usage and historical character limits, have fostered a culture of brevity and simplification through acronyms and non-standard spellings. Concurrently, the need to compensate for the absence of nonverbal cues has led to a multimodal approach, integrating emojis, GIFs, and memes to convey complex emotional and pragmatic meanings. These features are not random but are negotiated within "Communities of Practice" (CoP), where shared linguistic norms or "digital dialects" serve to construct identities and maintain group cohesion.

The transition from traditional, geography-based variation to dynamic, platform-driven contexts carries profound sociolinguistic implications. While the rise of non-standard digital forms often creates tension in educational settings due to fears of undermining formal literacy, research suggests that such variation actually expands a user's linguistic repertoire. However, these new forms of communication also intersect with issues of power and social stratification; fluency in digital dialects acts as a form of linguistic capital, and the weaponization of specialized lexical variations in political discourse can intensify social polarization and the formation of echo chambers.

REFERENCES

Alnuzaili, E. S., Waqar Amin, M., Saad Alghamdi, S., Ahmed Malik, N., A. Alhaj, A., & Ali, A. (2024). Emojis as graphic equivalents of prosodic features in natural speech: evidence from computer-mediated discourse of WhatsApp and facebook. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, *11*(1), 2391646.

Androutsopoulos, J. (2006). Introduction: Sociolinguistics and computer-mediated communication. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *419–438*.

Androutsopoulos, J. (2015). Networked multilingualism: Some language practices on Facebook and their implications. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *19*(2), 185–205.

Androutsopoulos, J. (2019). *androutsopoulos_staehr_2018-moving-methods-online_researching-digital-language-practices*. Cambridge University Press.

Bainotti, L., & Peeters, S. (2025). Enriching the metapicture: How to analyse audio-visual content on TikTok and other platforms. *New Media & Society*, 14614448251387108.

Baron, N. S. (2008). *Always On: Language in an Online and Mobile World*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195313055.001.0001

Baron, N. S. (2010). *Always on: Language in an online and mobile world*. Oxford University Press.

Bazarova, N. N., & Choi, Y. H. (2014). Self-disclosure in social media: Extending the functional approach to disclosure motivations and characteristics on social network sites. *Journal of Communication*, *64*(4), 635–657.

Crystal, D. (2006). *Language and the Internet*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511487002

Crystal, D. (2011). *Internet linguistics: A student guide*. Routledge.

Cușnir, C. (2025). TikTok design and experience: A semiotic technology approach. *Revista Română de Comunicare Şi Relaţii Publice*, *27*(1), 7–23.

Danesi, M. (2017). *The semiotics of emoji: The rise of visual language in the age of the internet*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Herring, S. C. (2005). Computer-mediated discourse. *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, 612–634.

Hidayati, F., Dallyono, R., Kurniawan, E., & Yudistira, R. S. (2026). The Emergence of Neologisms and New Linguistic Forms that Impact Communication on TikTok. *E-Journal of Linguistics*, *20*(1), 15–29.

Labov, W. (2006). *The social stratification of English in New York city*. Cambridge University Press.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge university press.

Makinde, S. O., Sakariyahu, S., Abdullahi, A., & Ibrahim, A. (2025). Multimodal Literacy and Sociocultural Dynamics in Online Communication: An Interdisciplinary View. In *Sociocultural and Multicultural Meanings in Online Communication* (pp. 409–436). IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

Meier J.V, Noel J.A., Kaspar K. (2021). Alone Together: Computer-Mediated Communication in Leisure Time During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic. Oiginal *Research article Front. Psychol., Sec. Human-Media Interaction. Vol. 12. (pp. 1-13).* https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.666655

Milner, R. M. (2018). *The world made meme: Public conversations and participatory media*. mit Press.

Page, R. E. (2013). *Stories and Social Media*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203148617

Ranger, G. (2007). David Crystal, Language and the Internet. *Lexis*. https://doi.org/10.4000/lexis.1831

Sharapanovska, Y. V. (2024). *Linguistic features of English-language internet discourse*.

Short, J., Williams, E., & Christie, B. (1976). *The Social Psychology of Telecommunications*. Wiley. https://books.google.co.id/books?id=GMdQPwAACAAJ

Svider, I. A. (2025). LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF DIGITAL ENGLISH DISCOURSE. *Львівський Філологічний Часопис*, *17*, 109–114.

Szymańska, M. (2025). Linguistic creativity on digital platforms. *Language and Dialogue*. https://doi.org/10.1075/ld.00218.szy

Tagg, C. (2020). English language and social media. In *The Routledge handbook of English language and digital humanities* (pp. 568–586). Routledge.

Tagg, C., & Seargeant, P. (2014). *The language of social media: Identity and community on the internet*.

Thurlow, C., & Mroczek, K. (2011). *Digital discourse: Language in the new media*. Oxford University Press.

Thurlow, C., Tomic, A., & Lengel, L. (2004). *Computer mediated communication*.

Tolins, J., & Samermit, P. (2016). GIFs as embodied enactments in text-mediated conversation. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, *49*(2), 75–91.

Vohidova, T. S. (2025). Multimodality in Internet Discourse: The Interplay of Textual, Visual, and Paralinguistic Elements. *TLEP–International Journal of Multidiscipline*, *2*(4), 23–30.

Zappavigna, M. (2012). *Discourse of Twitter and social media*.

AUTHOR'S PROFILE

Nurhayati S.

The author is a lecturer in the English Literature Study Program at Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika, Indonesia. Her research primarily focuses on applied linguistics within education, alongside discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, and syntax. This book chapter expounds the concept of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) that has fundamentally reshaped language by collapsing the traditional distinction between speech and writing into a hybrid register characterized by brevity, simplification, and multimodality. These variations are driven by specific technological affordances and negotiated within online communities of practice, where shared "digital dialects" allow users to perform unique identities and maintain social cohesion.

CHAPTER 14
FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Dwi Indarti
Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika, Jakarta
E-mail: dwi.diw@bsi.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics in multilingual societies stands at an inflection point. Rapid global flows of people, capital, and information, the accelerating diffusion of communication technologies, and heightened attention to social inequality and linguistic human rights have together transformed both the empirical object and the ethical commitments of the field. Historically, sociolinguistics studied variation as locally situated, dialect regions, class stratification, code choice in bilingual communities. However, language variation and change are shaped by layered global processes, such as migration, digital media, and transnational education, that operate at scales and speeds unfamiliar to earlier generations of researchers. These transformations ask sociolinguists to revise analytic frames, adopt new methods, and re-examine normative commitments (Kananaj & Karaj, 2024).

First, the scale of sociolinguistic inquiry has expanded. Local speech communities remain crucial, but many of those communities are now embedded in local networks, such as diasporic communities that maintain ties to homelands through social media and travel. Migrant workers negotiate civic incorporation and linguistic assimilation across multiple national contexts. Thus, the unit of analysis often becomes flows, networks, and repertoires, rather than territorial or generational. This requires conceptual tools that account for mobility, contact

ecologies, and digitally mediated repertoires (Segal, 2019). Second, technology, especially AI and large language models (LLMs) are rapidly becoming both objects and instruments of sociolinguistic work. Machine learning systems are trained on large corpora that encode social indexes, such as dialect markers, register differences, and identity cues. Those models not only can reveal patterns at scale, but they also reproduce sociolinguistic hierarchies embedded in training data. Consequently, sociolinguistics must engage critically with computational tools to use them for discovery, to interrogate their sociopolitical effects, and to develop corrective methods (Grieve, et al., 2025). Third, normative commitments are becoming more explicit. This discipline is increasingly called upon not only to describe language variation but also to promote documentation and revitalization of minority and indigenous languages. This ethical turn intersects with social justice movements and with policy in education, healthcare, and migration law, requiring scholars to balance research with advocacy, production, and applied interventions (Rojo & Pujolar, 2025).

Given these shifts, this chapter surveys future directions across five overlapping domains: (1) globalization, migration, and changing linguistic landscape; (2) technology, AI, and automated language variation; (3) the future of minority and indigenous languages; (4) sociolinguistics and social-justice advocacy; and (5) integrating theory and practice in future research. For each domain, the writer summarizes current knowledge, identifies methodological and ethical challenges, and proposes research priorities. The aim is to offer a map for researchers, practitioners, and students who wish to position sociolinguistics at the center of inquiry about language diversity, inequality, and change in the twenty-first century (Kananaj & Karaj, 2024). Finally, methodological pluralism will be central

to the field's future. Traditional ethnography and variationist quantitative methods, corpus methods, computational sociolinguistics, and participatory action research remain indispensable. Cultivating cross-disciplinary fluency with computation, digital humanities, urban studies, migration studies, and policy research will enable richer, ethically informed accounts of how language is shaped by global challenges (Grieve, et al., 2025).

GLOBALIZATION, MIGRATION, AND NEW LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPES

Globalization and human mobility have reconfigured sociolinguistic ecologies across the world. Although globalization is a contested descriptor, empirical work highlights several stable tendencies: intensified contact among speakers of diverse languages, accelerated spread of lingua franca, and the information of trans-local speech networks that extend across borderlines. These patterns reshape both language practices and language ideologies (Kananaj & Karaj, 2024). Migration drives many of the most visible changes. Contemporary migration is heterogeneous, including long-term settlement, circular labor migration, student mobility, and temporary asylum seekers, and each trajectory has different sociolinguistic consequences. Long-term settlement often leads to processes of language shift and bilingual repertoires in second and third generations. Circular migration sustains trans-local repertoires where speakers continuously alternate resources between home and host contexts. Student mobility transmits academic registers and disciplinary discourses across national boundaries. Researchers must therefore model mobility as a dynamic variable rather than a simple binary such as migrant versus non-migrant (Ha, et al., 2025). Urban growth and the rise of digital technologies interact with migration, producing complex and diverse linguistic

environments in cities. Urban centers bring together speakers of many languages and create contact spaces where new language forms develop through adjustment, blending, and convergence. This multilingual setting often leads to inventive code-mixing, the formation of fresh registers, and new indexical meanings that circulate quickly through social media and online networks. To analyze these dynamics, scholars can integrate detailed sociolinguistic interviews with social network approaches and corpus-based investigations of digital communication in urban contexts (Kananaj & Karaj, 2024).

Beliefs about language and official language policies play a crucial role. The approaches adopted by host societies, whether focused on assimilation, integration, pluralism, or exclusion, directly influence migrants' opportunities in schooling, work, and civic participation, thereby shaping patterns of language shift. Policies that prioritize a single national language tend to create structural pressures that accelerate minority language loss, whereas multilingual schooling and the public recognition of diverse languages can help support their continued use. Sociolinguistics can contribute evidence to inform policy decisions, while staying mindful of the political implications that accompany such recommendations (Kircher, et al., 2024). Advancing methods is essential for examining language change connected to migration, and mixed-methods approaches offer of the most insight. Extensive corpora and geotagged social-media data uncover broad trends and routes of linguistic diffusion, while ethnographic fieldwork and oral histories illuminate migrants' personal experiences of language and identity. Longitudinal studies make it possible to follow language patterns across generations. Computational tools can identify emerging varieties in large datasets, respecting ethical standards such as privacy and consent, and with sensitivity to sociolinguistic detail, including the difference between indexical

meanings and structural linguistic features (Grieve, et al., 2025). Key research directions include: (1) charting trans-local linguistic repertoires and the routes through which new linguistic features circulate within diaspora communities; (2) examining the impact of insecure legal conditions and labor arrangements on the preservation of migrants' languages; (3) exploring the ways urban infrastructures, such as housing, schools, and transportation systems, shape interaction and foster linguistic change; and (4) connecting linguistic patterns to concrete indicators of social well-being, including education, employment, and health. Pursuing these agendas will require cross-national comparative studies and active collaboration with community groups and policy stakeholders (Ha, et al., 2025). Ethical considerations are central. Migrant communities frequently experience various forms of vulnerability, so researchers need to adopt consent procedures suited to unstable circumstances, protect participants from risks such as data misuse, and ensure that research delivers tangible benefits to the community. Participatory approaches, such as collaborating with community members in formulating research questions and reviewing findings together, help counter extractive research practices and increase the social relevance of the work, ultimately supporting greater inclusion (Rojo & Pujolar, 2025).

TECHNOLOGY, AI, AND AUTOMATED LANGUAGE VARIATIONS

Technology is transforming language in several forms: as a means of gathering and analyzing data, as a space where new linguistic forms develop, and as a set of socio-technical infrastructures that reflect and reinforce social norms. In the past five years, the rise of large language models (LLMs) and other AI systems capable of generating, reshaping, and moderating language at scale has been especially influential. These

technologies function both as powerful research instruments for sociolinguists and as social agents whose outputs shape everyday language practices. Methodologically, computational tools make it possible to examine enormous datasets that were once too large or too complex to analyze, including social-media corpora, speech-technology platforms, and digitized archives. Machine-learning techniques can uncover fine-grained indexical patterns and linguistic variation across millions of data points, offering levels of statistical insight previously out of reach. Yet such outputs must be interpreted with caution; models capture statistical correlations rather than social meanings, may blur prestige features with social categories, and often reproduce biases embedded in the data they are trained on. For this reason, sociolinguists should work closely with computational specialists to develop transparent, socially informed models grounded in sociolinguistic theory (Grieve, et al., 2025). LLMs also influence everyday language practices. As people regularly engage with chatbots, predictive text, and machine-translation tools, these technologies shape their register choices, available vocabulary, and even spelling habits. Early studies show a two-way dynamic: human communication adjusts to the suggestions produced by language models, such as by adopting phrases proposed by writing assistants, while the models themselves reflect dominant linguistic norms, amplifying high-resource, widely used varieties and sidelining less-resourced or non-standard forms. This dynamic prompts important questions about whether such technologies promote linguistic leveling and homogenization, or whether new digital affordances such as memes, emojis, and platform-driven abbreviations foster new forms of linguistic diversity (Szekely, et al., 2025).

Issues of power and inequality lie at the heart of these developments. AI systems are built and trained within institutional settings that mirror global disparities. Languages

with large amounts of digital text receive disproportionate representation, while minority and low-resource languages remain scarce in training corpora. This data divide can reinforce existing linguistic hierarchies, enabling technologies to perform well in dominant varieties while struggling with marginalized ones. Reducing these inequalities calls for deliberate efforts to expand resources through corpus development and community-driven annotation, as well as participatory design processes that place under-resourced languages at the center (Maly, 2024). Future research priorities include: (1) examining how AI-generated language signals social categories and the implications this has for stereotyping and representation; (2) collaboratively creating datasets and models with communities to ensure that language technologies are inclusive; (3) monitoring linguistic shifts that emerge from people's everyday use of writing assistants and translation tools; and (4) developing audit frameworks that assess sociolinguistic biases in models, such as inequality performance across language varieties. Methodologically, the most productive approaches will blend corpus-based analysis, ethnographic study of human-AI interaction, and participatory evaluation with community members (Grieve, et al., 2025).

From an ethical standpoint, sociolinguists must carefully consider competing priorities. While AI tools can support the documentation and revitalization of endangered languages, they also risk turning linguistic data into commodities or creating new privacy vulnerabilities for communities. To navigate these issues responsibly, researchers should follow ethical guidelines, including transparent consent procedures, frameworks for community ownership of data, and fair benefit-sharing. Supporting open, community-governed language resources is essential for resisting the concentration of linguistic data in the systems. Pedagogy must likewise adapt. Sociolinguistics

programs should integrate foundational computational skills, such as corpus analysis, AI ethics, and working with language models, while maintaining the discipline's core expertise in fieldwork and qualitative interpretation. Interdisciplinary preparation equips scholars to critically evaluate technological claims and to help design language technologies that are socially accountable. Ultimately, the field's future depends on bringing together sociolinguistic knowledge, technical skill, and meaningful collaboration with communities (Nasrullah, 2025).

THE FUTURE OF MINORITY AND INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

The future of minority and indigenous languages remains uncertain. Globalization and urbanization continue to speed up language shift and loss, yet increased attention to linguistic rights, the rise of digital platforms, and focused revitalization initiatives are opening new pathways for preservation and renewal. In the past five years, creative applications of technology, community-driven teaching practices, and sustained policy advocacy have emerged, providing promising models for supporting linguistic diversity (Sihite & Sibarani, 2024). Comprehensive documentation is still significant. Well-curated and accessible corpora, such as audio, video, or annotated texts, help preserve linguistic structures and support the creation of teaching materials and technological tools. However, this work must be guided by the community itself: speakers should determine what genres to document, which settings or practices to record, and which knowledge holders to involve. Access policies must also align with community norms and expectations. Ethical documentation depends on shared ownership of digital archives, strong local capacity-building through training community linguists, and long-term funding arrangements (Nasrullah, 2025). Technology is opening fresh

possibilities for language revitalization. Mobile applications, social-media spaces, and community-focused digital platforms can provide meaningful contexts of use for younger generations. Machine-learning tools can support speech recognition, automated subtitles, and orthographic resources for low-resource languages, provided that enough digital data exists and that the tools are created collaboratively with communities to ensure cultural relevance and accurate representation. The most effective initiatives blend linguistic expertise, strong community leadership, and user-friendly technological design (Sihite & Sibarani, 2024).

Education policy plays a crucial role. Immersion model, bilingual programs, and mother-tongue components in the curriculum help reinforce intergenerational language transmission. Policies that bring indigenous languages into early childhood education and media expand their functional domains and enhance their social status. Yet policy measures alone cannot succeed without strong community support and adequate resources, including trained teachers, appropriate curricula, and instructional materials. More sustainable and culturally grounded outcomes emerge when communities are actively involved in designing educational programs (Kircher, et al., 2024). Key research directions include: (1) developing approaches to expand computational support for low-resource languages, such as few-shot and transfer learning methods guided by community oversight; (2) creating durable, community-driven models for documentation and archiving; (3) conducting ethnographic studies of emerging digital spaces where revitalization is taking place, such as TikTok, gaming platforms, and diaspora networks; and (4) assessing the impact of educational programs by measuring both classroom learning and community-based transmission. Funding structures that emphasize long-term community benefits and capacity building

will be crucial for sustaining these efforts (Sihite & Sibarani, 2024).

SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY

Sociolinguistics is becoming ever more closely linked to social justice. As communities deal with systemic inequities, such as racialized poverty, disparities in education, and instability faced by migrants, language functions both as a marker and a driver of social inequality. Research that focuses on description without considering justice can unintentionally reinforce extractive practices, whereas work that places justice at the center can produce insights that directly inform policy and real-world interventions (Rojo & Pujolar, 2025). Three areas make clear why a justice-oriented approach is essential. The first is education: decisions about the language of instruction shape students' academic success, identity information, and future opportunities. Although research consistently demonstrates that early mother-tongue education enhances cognitive development and learning retention, many school systems continue to prioritize majority or former colonial languages for reasons of prestige or assumed economic value. Justice-focused scholarship can highlight the real impacts of these choices, develop bilingual program models grounded in evidence, and collaborate with teachers and communities to put these alternatives into practice (Kircher, et al., 2024). Second, civic participation and access to essential services depend heavily on language. When a linguistic barrier exists, people face reduced access to healthcare, legal support, and social welfare programs. Sociolinguistic research can identify where communication failures occur and collaboratively develop solutions, such as interpreting services, translated documents, and multilingual helplines, to promote access. Crucially, this work must recognize the power relations

that lead to certain language varieties being stigmatized. Effective interventions should aim not only to improve communication but also to challenge stigma and affirm the linguistic practices of the communities they serve (Rojo & Pujolar, 2025). Third, issues of representation and media visibility are critical: which voices are allowed to appear in public discourse, and on what terms? Both algorithmic systems and editorial decisions influence who gets represented, often sidelining marginalized language varieties or depicting them unfavorably. Justice-oriented work can involve public-facing scholarship, such as policy briefs and opinion, collaborations with community media outlets, and systematic audits of algorithmic moderation and recommendation tools that suppress minority speech. Such efforts are strongest when conducted through interdisciplinary partnerships, including media studies and computational auditing (Grieve, et al., 2025).

Methodologically, justice-oriented scholarship involves participatory action research, shared authorship with community members, and evaluations focused on real-world impact. Ethically, researchers must guard against involvement and ensure that project timelines and goals reflect community needs rather than external pressures. Academic systems that emphasize rapid publication can clash with the slower, relationship-based work required for community-led change, meaning that funders and universities should better support and reward engaged scholarship. Sociolinguistics also has much to offer in legal and policy fields: providing expert testimony on language rights, advising on curriculum reform, and supplying evidence to support multilingual public services. Yet scholars must remain critically self-aware, as even well-intentioned interventions can produce unintended effects. For example, categorizing a language as ‘endangered’ can marginalize its speakers. Ongoing

reflexivity and meaningful consultation with communities are important (Rojo & Pujolar, 2025).

INTEGRATING THEORY AND PRACTICE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future work in sociolinguistics should purposefully bridge theoretical frameworks with practical application. Concepts such as repertoire theory, indexicality, language ecology, and social network theory offer crucial lenses for interpreting linguistic behavior, while practical engagement turns these insights into concrete initiatives, such as educational programs, language technologies, and policy recommendations. Achieving this integration demands epistemic humility, openness to diverse methods, and stronger institutional backing for research that translates theory into social action (Kananaj & Karaj, 2024). Several methodological approaches can strengthen the connection between theory and practice. The first is interactive co-design, in which researchers collaborate with community partners to define research questions, test interventions, gather evidence, and refine approaches based on shared feedback. This cyclical process produces theories grounded in local realities as well as usable outcomes. The second is the use of mixed methods: large-scale corpora and computational models can reveal overarching trends, while ethnographic and participatory approaches provide insight into the underlying processes and social meanings. The third is the creation of translational outputs, such as curricula, toolkits, policy briefs, and open-access corpora that practitioners and communities can directly adopt and adapt (Rojo & Pujolar, 2025).

Interdisciplinary collaboration significantly amplifies sociolinguistic impact. Literacy specialists, data scientists, urban planners, migration researchers, and public-health practitioners can partner with sociolinguists to create interventions that are

both theoretically grounded and practically workable. A multilingual public-health initiative, for instance, requires expertise in register variation, computational tools for message targeting, and evaluation strategies. Such collaboration demonstrates how theoretical insights guide practical solutions, while real-world implementation feeds back into sharpening theoretical understanding. Strengthening capacity is equally important. Training programs should equip researchers with computational competencies, such as corpus development and introductory machine learning, participatory research skills, ethical approaches to data governance, and the ability to translate findings into policy-relevant formats. Funders should invest in sustained, long-term partnerships rather than isolated short-term projects. Likewise, institutions can encourage translational scholarship by recognizing community impact and applied contributions in promotion and evaluation processes (Grieve, et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION

Sociolinguistics in multilingual societies will remain a dynamic, ethically engaged field. Globalization and migration produce continually shifting repertoires and contact ecologies; technology and AI offer unprecedented analytic power but also amplify inequalities; minority and indigenous languages face both threat and new opportunities for revitalization; and social-justice-oriented scholarship demands new modes of practice and accountability. These complex dynamics require scholarly humility, methodological plurality, and deep partnerships with communities and allied disciplines. Key priorities looking forward are clear. Researchers should (1) map trans-local repertoires and the flows that sustain them; (2) develop sociolinguistically informed computational tools that center low-resource languages and audit biases; (3) co-design

documentation and revitalization projects that ensure community ownership; (4) pursue participatory, action-oriented research that advances linguistic justice; and (5) reform training and evaluation structures so translational work is valued. Implementing these priorities requires funding that supports longitudinal, community-centered work and institutional incentives that reward engaged scholarship. Conceptually, sociolinguistics can reconceive the "speech community" as a networked, trans-local, and media-mediated phenomenon. Methodologically, the field should pair computational scale with ethnographic depth. Ethically, community rights, data sovereignty, and benefit sharing must be non-negotiable. Practically, scholars should seek collaborative partnerships with educators, technologists, policy makers, and community leaders to turn knowledge into equitable outcomes. In short, the future of sociolinguistics in multilingual contexts is not only about diagnosing change: it is about participating responsibly in shaping it. The next decade offers both urgent challenges and powerful possibilities. By integrating rigorous inquiry with ethical engagement and technological literacy, sociolinguistics can play a decisive role in promoting linguistic diversity, democratic inclusion, and social justice in an increasingly interconnected world.

REFERENCES

Grieve, J., Bartl, S., Fuoli, M., Grafmiller, J., Huang, W., Napolitano, A., Murakami, A., Perlman, M., Roemling, D., & Winter, B. (2025). The sociolinguistic foundations of language modelling. *Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence*, *7*(1472411). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3389/frai.2024.1472411

Ha, J.T., DeWaard, J., Abel, G., Tsuchiya, K., Pinchoff, J., Levesque, C., & Price, K. (2025). The globalization of

international migration? A conceptual and data-driven synthesis. *Population and Development Review*, *51*(1), 421–448. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12686

Kananaj, A., & Karaj, E. (2024). Examining the linguistic tapestry of globalization: Structural borrowings. *RGSA*, *18*(2), 1–17. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24857/rgsa.v18n2-147

Kircher, R., Kutlu, E., & Velinga, M. (2024). Promoting minority language use to foster revitalisation: Insights from new speakers of West Frisian. *Applied Linguistics*, *45*(3), 514–532. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amad045

Maly, I. (2024). AI, power and sociolinguistics. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *28*(5), 11–15. https://doi.org/10.1111/josl.12681

Nasrullah, R. (2025). Artifical intelligence in language revitalization: A systematic review of global challenges and opportunities. *Prosiding Konferensi Linguistik Tahunan Atma Jaya (KOLITA) 23*, *23*(23), 245–257. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.25170/kolita.v23i23.7172

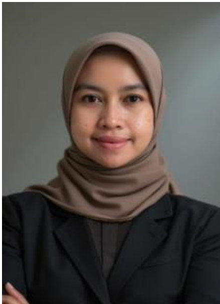
Rojo, L. M., & Pujolar, J. (2025). Negotiating sociolinguistic justice: Turning spaces of inequality into spaces of conscientization. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *291*, 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2022-0114

Segal, U. A. (2019). Globalization, migration, and ethnicity. *Public Health*, *172*, 135–142. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2019.04.011

Sihite, M. R., & Sibarani, B. (2024). Technology and language revitalization in Indonesia: A literature review of digital tools for preserving endangered languages. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *3*(2), 610–620. https://doi.org/10.55299/ijere.v3i2.988

Szekely, E., Miniota, J., & Hejna, M. M. (2025). Will AI shape the way we speak? The emerging sociolinguistic influence of synthetic voices. *Proceedings of the 15th International Workshop on Spoken Dialogue Systems Technology*, 335–340. https://aclanthology.org/2025.iwsds-1.37.pdf

AUTHOR'S PROFILE



Dwi Indarti

The author residences in Kabupaten Tangerang, Banten, but her major activities take place in Jakarta. She is now pursuing a doctoral degree majoring in Applied English Linguistics at Catholic University of Indonesia, Atma Jaya, Jakarta. Her research fields covering applied linguistics, literature, translation, and corpus linguistics. She has published research articles in nationally accredited journals, such as Studies in English Language and Education (SiELE) journal (SINTA 1, Scopus Q1), Journal of Languages and Language Teaching (JOLLT) journal (SINTA 2), Lingua Cultura journal (SINTA 2), and more.

SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE VARIATION IN MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES

In today's globalized and digitally connected world, multilingualism is no longer the exception; it is the norm. Sociolinguistics and Language Variation in Multilingual Societies offers a comprehensive exploration of how language operates within culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Across fourteen chapters, the book examines the dynamic relationship between language and society, focusing on how social factors, such as class, ethnicity, gender, identity, and context, shape linguistic variation. Readers are introduced to key sociolinguistic concepts, including bilingualism, code-switching, language attitudes, and speech communities, while also gaining insight into how multilingual individuals navigate everyday linguistic choices to convey social meaning. Beyond theoretical foundations, the book highlights real-world applications of sociolinguistics across language planning, bilingual education, digital communication, and research methodology. Case studies from multilingual societies illustrate how language reflects identity, cultural heritage, and power relations in authentic contexts. The final chapters address contemporary and future challenges, including globalization, artificial intelligence, digital communication, and the preservation of minority languages. Ultimately, this book invites readers to view linguistic diversity not as a problem to be solved, but as a valuable resource that enriches societies and strengthens cultural identity.

FUTURE SCIENCE
Perum Sarimadu II B3 No.09 Pakisaji, Kab. Malang,
Provinsi Jawa Timur, Indonesia 65162
Website : www.futuresciencepress.com

IKAPI
IKATAN PENERBIT INDONESIA
No. 348/JTI/2022

ISBN 978-634-7592-14-9 (PDF)

9 786347 592149