

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Language Use and Language Change

1. Language Use

Language use refers to the way individuals employ language to communicate meaning, express ideas, establish social relationships, and respond to particular communicative contexts. Language use is not limited to the selection of words but also involves how language is adapted to different purposes, audiences, relationships, and communication environments. Therefore, language use is closely related to the social and communicative context in which language occurs.

In digital communication, language use has become increasingly flexible, informal, and creative. Social media provides spaces where users communicate through posts, captions, comments, hashtags, and text-based interactions. These forms of communication encourage users to employ various linguistic forms, including abbreviations, slang, borrowed words, code-mixing, and newly created expressions. In this study, social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), and WhatsApp are considered important environments for observing the language use of Generation Z. These

platforms provide opportunities for Generation Z to express ideas, interact with others, follow trends, and experiment with different linguistic forms.

The language use of Generation Z is also influenced by their frequent exposure to English through digital media. English lexical items may be incorporated into Indonesian communication because they are frequently encountered in online content, entertainment, technology, and global digital culture. Some English words are used directly, while others are adapted to Indonesian morphological patterns. For example, forms such as *nge-like* and *nge-post* demonstrate how English lexical elements can be combined with Indonesian morphological elements. This shows that Generation Z does not merely reproduce foreign vocabulary but actively adapts linguistic resources to their communicative needs.

Language use among Generation Z also has social and communicative functions. The use of slang, borrowed words, and innovative expressions may help users communicate efficiently, express humor, show familiarity with digital culture, and establish a sense of belonging within particular communities. Thus, language use in social media is not simply a matter of linguistic choice but can also reflect users' identities and social

relationships. The thesis emphasizes that language innovation among Generation Z is connected with identity, digital literacy, social belonging, and cultural adaptation.

In this study, language use therefore refers to the actual linguistic practices of Generation Z in social media communication. It includes the use of Indonesian, English, mixed forms, borrowed expressions, slang, and newly formed words in posts, captions, comments, hashtags, and online conversations. Examining these practices provides a basis for understanding the processes of language absorption and word formation that occur in digital communication.

2. Language Change

Language change refers to the continuous development and modification of language over time. Language is dynamic rather than fixed because speakers continuously adapt linguistic forms to changes in society, culture, technology, and communication practices. In the context of this study, language change can be observed through the emergence, adaptation, and spread of new linguistic forms used by Generation Z on social media.

One of the important processes contributing to language change is language absorption or borrowing. According to Haugen (1950) and Hockett (1958),

borrowing occurs when a language adopts words, expressions, or structures from another language as a result of language contact. In the digital era, continuous exposure to English through social media, technology, entertainment, and global communication has increased opportunities for English vocabulary to enter Indonesian communication. English words such as *content*, *viral*, *live*, *comment*, and *share* may be used in Indonesian digital communication without being translated.

Language change can also occur through word formation. Bauer (1983) and Plag (2003) explain that processes such as derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, and acronym formation contribute to vocabulary expansion. Through these processes, speakers can create new words or modify existing linguistic elements to produce expressions that correspond to new communicative needs. In social media environments, these processes may occur rapidly because users continuously respond to emerging trends, memes, popular culture, and digital practices.

The relationship between language use and language change can be seen when particular linguistic forms are repeatedly used within a community. A word or expression may initially appear as an informal or innovative form, but repeated use can make it

increasingly familiar and accepted among other users. In this way, individual language practices can contribute to broader linguistic developments. Social media can accelerate this process because linguistic expressions can circulate rapidly between users and across different platforms.

Language change in social media is particularly visible through the interaction between Indonesian and English. Generation Z may incorporate English lexical elements into Indonesian structures, resulting in hybrid expressions such as *nge-share*, *di-mention*, and *overthinking-an*. These forms demonstrate that language change does not necessarily involve replacing one language with another. Instead, speakers can combine and adapt linguistic resources from different languages according to their communicative needs.

Social media therefore functions as an important environment for contemporary language development. New expressions can emerge, circulate, and become widely recognized within a relatively short period. The thesis explains that social media facilitates the rapid circulation, normalization, and acceptance of newly created lexical items, making digital platforms an important catalyst for language change.

In relation to the present study, language change is understood through two major linguistic processes: language absorption and word formation. The data in this research demonstrate that Generation Z adopts English lexical items into Indonesian communication while simultaneously creating new forms through morphological processes. The findings of the study show that language absorption includes *loan words*, *loan blends*, and *loan translation*, while word formation includes *derivation*, *compounding*, *blending*, *clipping*, *acronym*, and *neologism*.

Therefore, language change in this study is viewed as a natural and continuous process resulting from language contact, digital communication, and linguistic creativity. The use of borrowed vocabulary and the creation of new lexical forms demonstrate how Generation Z actively participates in shaping contemporary language. Social media provides the environment in which these linguistic innovations emerge and spread, making it an important setting for examining language development in the digital era.

B. Language Absorption and Language Borrowing

1. Definition of Language Absorption

Language absorption, also known as lexical borrowing, refers to the process by which a language adopts words, expressions, or structure from another language due to social interaction, cultural contact, or technological development. According to Hockett (1958) and Haugen (1950), borrowing is a natural linguistic phenomenon that occurs when speakers are exposed to external linguistic influences. Borrowing can take some forms such as **loanwords**, which are directly taken from a source language and retain their original meaning; **loan blends**, which combine native and foreign elements; and **loan translation (calques)**, where foreign phrases are translated literally into the target language.

This context of this study, language absorption is closely related to the linguistic behaviour of Generation Z on social media. This group often integrates English terms such as *unfollow*, *ngelike*, or *ngepost* into daily digital communication. The widespread exposure to global content and the dominance of English in online platforms have accelerated this borrowing process. The adoption of foreign words does not only serve functional purposes but also symbolizes modernity, digital literacy, and identity among young people. Thus, language absorption in this context represents both linguistic

adaption and sociocultural expression that reflects the globalization of communication (Fajrina & Irawan, 2024).

The Code-Switching–Calquing Continuum, proposed by Inga Hennecke and Evelyn Wiesinger (first published 2023; journal issue Hennecke & Wiesinger, 2025), is a theoretical framework in contact linguistics that reconceptualizes language contact phenomena—especially code-switching, borrowing, and calquing—as part of a unified continuum rather than strictly separate categories. Traditionally, code-switching refers to the alternation between two languages within a conversation or sentence, while calquing (loan translation) involves replicating the structure or meaning of expressions from one language into another. However, Hennecke and Wiesinger argue that these processes cannot be sharply distinguished because they rely on similar cognitive mechanisms and linguistic resources, particularly multiword units and constructions that exist between the lexicon and syntax.

The Simple View of Borrowing and Code-Switching proposed by Jeanine Treffers-Daller (2023) aims to simplify the long-debated distinction between borrowing and code-switching by introducing a single core principle: “listedness”. According to this theory, the key factor that determines whether a linguistic item is a

borrowing is whether it is stored in the speaker's mental lexicon as a fixed unit. If a word or multiword expression is mentally "listed" (i.e., treated as a stored, conventionalized form), it is considered a borrowing; if it is instead generated dynamically during speech using grammatical rules from two languages, it is considered code-switching.

2. The Definiton of Language Borrowing

Language borrowing refers to the process through which one language adopts words, expressions, or other linguistic elements from another language as a result of contact between speakers of different languages. In the context of this study, language borrowing is closely related to the influence of English on Indonesian, particularly in the language used by Generation Z on social media. The process occurs when users are frequently exposed to foreign linguistic forms and subsequently incorporate them into their everyday communication.

Both language absorption and word formation among Genertion Z represent a form as a linguistic innovation influenced by digital communication, globalization, and identity contruction. This phenomenon shows that language is a dynamic and adaptive to social context, particularly in the digital era where social media

accelerates language contact and creativity (Putri et al., 2025)

3. The function of language absorption and Language Borrowing

The function of language absorption and word formation among generation Z are multifaceted, encompassing communicative, social, and cultural dimension.

- 1) Communicative efficiency, borrowed and newly formed words enable Gen Z users to communicate more effectively and concisely in fast-paced online environment. The nature of digital communication which often values brevity and immediacy, encourages the use of short, catchy, and expensive terms (Nashrudina et al., 2025)
- 2) Identity expression, language is an essential tool for expressing identity. Through the absorption of English words and creation of neologism, Generation Z constructs digital identities that reflect modernity, global awareness and creativity. Using foreign words signal social prestige technological fluency, and affiliation with global culture (Putri et al.,)
- 3) Cultural adaption, language absorption functions as a means of cultural adaption to globalization. English loan words, for instance, are adopted not only for

convenience but also as symbol of modern lifestyle and innovation (Gentina, 2020).

- 4) Social bonding and group belonging, shared language innovation foster a sense of belonging among Generation Z users. The use of specific slang, abbreviations, and hybrid terms create “insider” language communities where member recognize each other through linguistic familiarity (Zappavigna, 2025)
- 5) Linguistic palyfulness and creatifity, word formation prosesess allow young speakers to manipulate language playfully. This creativity enhances engagement, humor, and self expression in digital discourse. Such linguistic flexibility demonstrates an active understanding of language as both a communicative and aesthetic resource (wadeea, 2024).

C. Types and Processes of Lexical Borrowing

Types of language absorption and Language Borrowing

According to Haugen (1950), borrowing prosesess can be classified into three major types:

- 1) Loan words – Are lexical items that are directly adopted from the source language into the receiving language. In this process, the borrowed word is used

without translating its meaning into the receiving language. English loan words are frequently found in Indonesian digital communication because Generation Z is highly exposed to English through social media, technology, entertainment, and global trends. Examples include *content*, *viral*, *comment*, and *share*, which can be used directly in Indonesian social media interactions. The use of loan words demonstrates the direct influence of English on Indonesian vocabulary.

- 2) Loan blends – Occur when elements from the source language are combined with elements from the receiving language. Unlike loan words, which may be adopted directly, loan blends involve a mixture of linguistic elements from two languages. In the context of Indonesian social media communication, English lexical roots can be combined with Indonesian morphological elements. Examples found in the thesis include *nge-like*, *nge-post*, *nge-share*, *di-mention*, and *overthinking-an*. These forms demonstrate that Generation Z does not simply adopt English words but adapts them to Indonesian linguistic patterns.
- 3) Loan translation (calques) – Also known as a calque, occurs when an expression from the source language

is translated into the receiving language while maintaining the conceptual structure of the original expression. Rather than directly adopting the foreign word, speakers reproduce its meaning through equivalent elements in their own language. In this study, loan translation is treated as one of the three forms of language absorption used to classify the linguistic data collected from Generation Z's social media communication.

D. Word Formation Processes

According to Bauer (1983) and Plag (2003) outline eight types of word formation relevant to this study:

- 1) Derivation – The addition of affixes to base forms, e.g., unfriend, repost, dislike.
- 2) Compounding – Combining two words to create a new term, e.g., hashtag activism, keyboard warrior.
- 3) Blending – Merging parts of two words, e.g., bromance, infotainment.
- 4) Clipping – Shortening longer words, e.g., info (from information), prof (from professor).
- 5) Acronyms and initialisms – Creating new words from initial letters, e.g., FOMO, LOL, OMG.
- 6) Neologism – Neologism refers to the creation or emergence of new words or expressions that arise to

describe new concepts, trends, experiences, or communicative needs. According to Bauer (1983), neologisms represent linguistic creativity because they introduce new lexical forms that may not previously exist in the language. In social media communication, neologisms can emerge rapidly through trends, slang, memes, and digital interactions, particularly among Generation Z. Therefore, neologism reflects the dynamic nature of language and the ability of language users to create innovative expressions according to contemporary communication needs.

Indicator of language absorption and language borrowing

To identify and analyze language absorption and word formation in digital context, seven indicator can be used:

- a. Frequency of borrowed or hybrid words, the recurring use of loanwords and mixed-language expression indicates linguistic borrowing and integration in everyday communication (Fajrina et al., 2024)
- b. Morphological adaptation, the modification of English words using Indonesian affixes, such as

nge-, ke-, or di-, signals assimilation into local grammar, e.g., ngepost, dilike, ke-save.

- c. Phonological or orthographic changes, the pronunciation and spelling of borrowed words often adapt to Indonesian norms, as in pleksible (from flexible) or fotokopi (from photocopy).
- d. Semantic shifts and extensions, borrowed words may gain new meanings in local context. For example, baper (from bawa perasaan) is redefined as an emotional reaction unique to online culture.
- e. Code-mixing and code-switching frequency, the alternation between English and Indonesian in single sentence or discourse segments is a hallmark of Gen Z communication, reflecting both proficiency and creativity. (Zulianti et al. 2022).
- f. Neologism production rate, the emergence of new words or variations within a short time frame indicates active linguistic innovation among digital communities (Zhu & Jurgens, 2021).
- g. Social media contextual usage, the function of each other borrowed or formed word depends on the digital platforms (e.g., TikTok for humor, Instagram for aesthetics, Twitter (X) for commentary).

These indicators provide linguistic evidence of how Generation Z reshapes language dynamically through digital interaction.

E. Word Formation in Digital Communication

Word formation refers to the processes through which new words are created or existing words are modified to produce new lexical forms. According to Bauer (1983) and Plag (2003), word formation includes several processes such as derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronym formation, and neologism. In digital communication, these processes become increasingly visible because social media provides a fast, informal, and creative environment for users to develop new expressions. Generation Z frequently modifies existing words, combines different linguistic elements, shortens words, or creates new expressions to communicate efficiently and respond to emerging digital trends. The thesis identifies social media as an environment where users continuously experiment with linguistic forms, particularly through interactions on Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), and WhatsApp.

The use of word formation in digital communication is also influenced by the rapid circulation of trends, memes, popular culture, and interactions among online

communities. New forms can emerge quickly and gain wider recognition through repeated use across social media platforms. For example, processes such as blending can create new forms by combining parts of existing words, clipping can shorten longer words, while acronyms can provide concise expressions suitable for fast digital interaction. In addition, derivation allows users to attach morphological elements to existing words, including English lexical items adapted to Indonesian structures. These processes demonstrate that Generation Z does not only consume existing vocabulary but actively participates in creating and modifying linguistic forms.

Therefore, word formation in digital communication can be understood as an important form of linguistic creativity and language development. The rapid and interactive nature of social media encourages users to produce lexical innovations that are meaningful within particular digital communities. In this study, word formation is analyzed through six processes: derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronym, and neologism. These processes provide a framework for examining how Generation Z creates and develops new lexical forms in their social media communication.

F. Generation Z and Linguistic Behaviour

Generation Z refers to the generation born approximately between 1997 and 2012 and is commonly associated with intensive engagement with digital technology and social media. In the context of this study, Generation Z is considered an important group for linguistic research because social media has become an essential environment for their everyday communication and self-expression. Through platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, X, and WhatsApp, Generation Z is frequently exposed to English vocabulary and various forms of digital communication. This exposure contributes to the incorporation of English lexical items into Indonesian communication and encourages linguistic creativity.

Generation Z does not only adopt foreign vocabulary but also modifies and creates linguistic forms according to their communicative needs. Examples such as *nge-like*, *nge-post*, and *di-like* demonstrate the combination of English lexical items with Indonesian morphological elements, while expressions such as *gabut*, *mager*, *bucin*, and *santuy* demonstrate linguistic creativity and innovation.

Therefore, social media can be viewed as an important environment for language contact, language adaptation, and word formation. The language practices of

Generation Z are also associated with communicative efficiency, identity expression, cultural adaptation, social belonging, and linguistic creativity.

Based on these characteristics, Generation Z is relevant to the present study because their intensive participation in digital communication provides a context in which English vocabulary can be absorbed into Indonesian and new linguistic forms can emerge. Thus, examining Generation Z's language use on social media can provide insight into the processes of **language absorption and word formation** in contemporary digital communication.

1. Language Use

Language use refers to the way individuals employ language to communicate meaning, express ideas, establish social relationships, and respond to particular communicative contexts. In everyday communication, language use may vary depending on the purpose of communication, the relationship between users, the communication environment, and the medium through which interaction takes place. In digital communication, these variations can be observed through the use of informal expressions, abbreviations, borrowed words, slang, and newly formed lexical items.

In the context of Generation Z, social media provides an important environment for language use because

communication frequently occurs through captions, comments, posts, hashtags, and text-based interactions. The language used in these environments tends to be flexible, informal, and creative. The present study focuses on language use as the context in which language absorption and word formation occur. Thus, the study does not examine language use as an independent phenomenon but examines how Generation Z uses absorbed and newly formed linguistic expressions in social media communication.

G. Generation Z's Language Use on Social Media

Generation Z's language use on social media refers to the way individuals born approximately between the late 1990s and early 2010s use language to communicate, express identity, and interact in digital environments. Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), and WhatsApp provide spaces where Generation Z can communicate quickly and informally through captions, comments, posts, hashtags, and chat messages. Their language use is characterized by flexibility, creativity, informality, and the frequent adaptation of linguistic forms to suit digital communication.

One important characteristic of Generation Z's language use is the interaction between Indonesian and

English. English words and expressions are frequently incorporated into Indonesian communication, particularly when users discuss topics related to entertainment, lifestyle, technology, fashion, and popular culture. Examples include words such as *update*, *random*, *insecure*, *healing*, *posting*, and *support*. Some English expressions are used directly, while others are adapted to Indonesian linguistic patterns. This phenomenon demonstrates that social media exposure contributes to the process of language contact and language absorption, in which elements from English become part of Generation Z's everyday linguistic practices.

Generation Z also demonstrates considerable linguistic creativity through word formation. Digital communication encourages users to shorten, combine, modify, and create words to make communication more efficient and expressive. Forms such as clipping, blending, compounding, acronyms, and neologisms can emerge and spread rapidly through social media. Consequently, social media does not merely function as a medium for communication but also serves as an environment where new linguistic forms are created, shared, and popularized.

Furthermore, language use among Generation Z is influenced by the informal and fast-paced nature of social

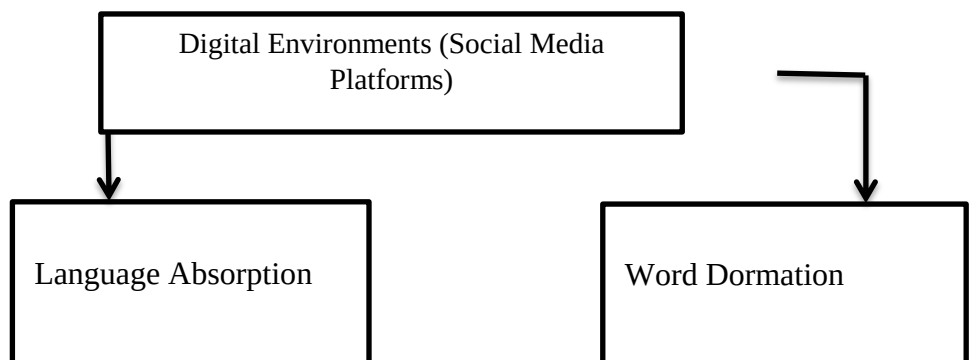
media communication. Users tend to prioritize brevity, familiarity, and expressiveness rather than formal grammatical structures. Abbreviations, slang, borrowed words, emojis, hashtags, and newly created expressions are commonly used to convey meaning and emotion efficiently. A linguistic expression that initially appears within a particular online community can subsequently become widely used when it is repeatedly encountered and reproduced by other users.

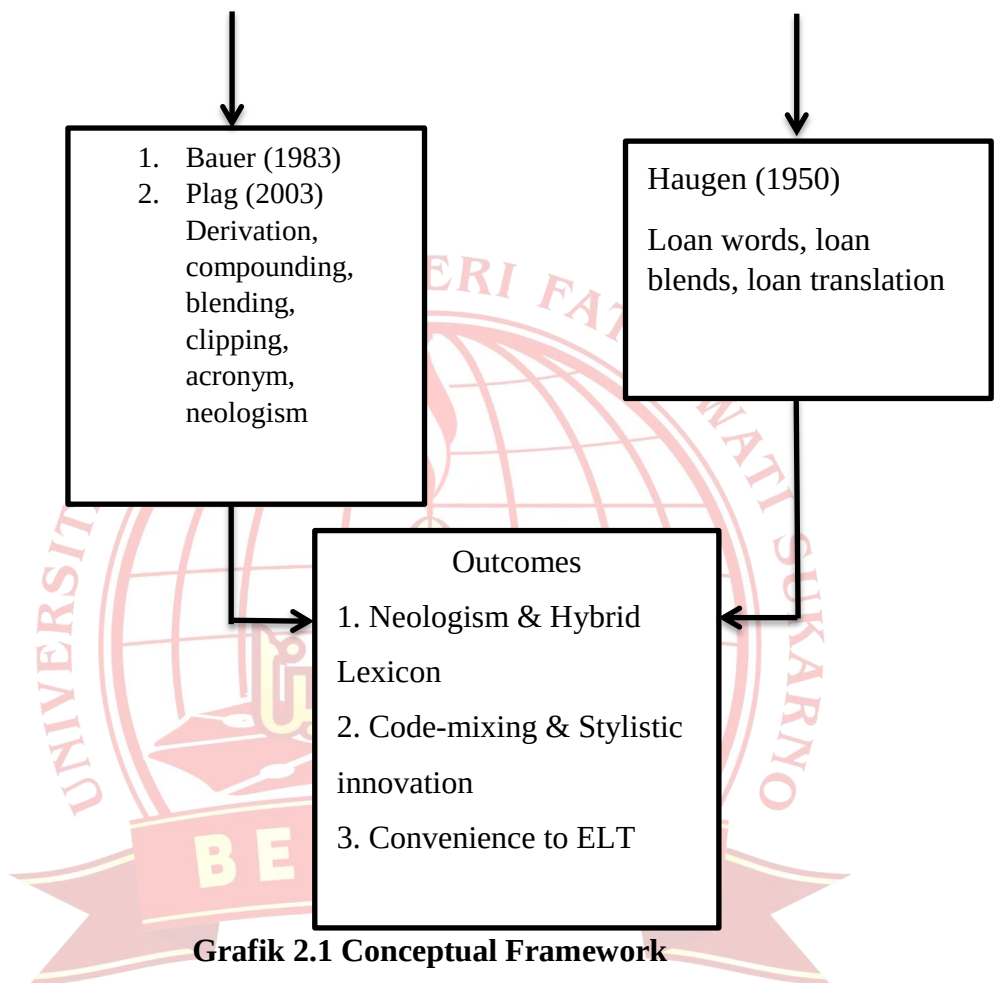
In the context of this study, Generation Z's language use on social media is therefore understood as a dynamic linguistic practice involving language absorption and word formation. The frequent interaction between Indonesian and English, together with the creation and adaptation of new lexical forms, demonstrates that social media contributes to ongoing language development. This makes social media an important environment for examining how Generation Z adopts foreign linguistic elements and creates new forms of expression in contemporary digital communication.

H. Conceptual Framework

The problem in this study arises from the increasing phenomenon of language absorption and the creation of new words among Generation Z on social media platforms. The widespread use of mixed language, particularly the

combination of Indonesian and English, has led to the emergence of new linguistic patterns that differ from conventional language norms. This situation reflects not only the dynamic nature of language but also the influence of digital communication in shaping new forms of expression. Based on preliminary observations, Generation Z tends to adopt and modify English words—such as *nge-like*, *nge-post*, or *unfollow*—while also creating innovative expressions like *gabut*, *mager*, and *santuy*, which illustrate the processes of borrowing and word formation. The researcher became interested in further investigating this phenomenon because it represents a rich area for linguistic study, where social media serves as both a platform for creativity and a catalyst for language change. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how the processes of language absorption and word formation occur among Generation Z users on social media and to examine the sociolinguistic factors that influence their use of such linguistic innovations. The following graph illustrates the conceptual framework of this research as follows:





Explanation

1. Digital Environment as the Context

At the top of the model is the digital environment, represented by social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Twitter (X), and WhatsApp. These platforms

serve as the primary arena for communication among Generation Z, characterized by immediacy, interactivity, and creativity. The digital environment enables constant exposure to global content, especially English, and facilitates rapid linguistic exchange between users. This exposure encourages both language borrowing and word formation as Gen Z adapts language to fit the fast-changing online discourse.

2. Linguistic Processes: Language Absorption and word formation

The next level of the model represents **linguistic processes**, which are the core mechanisms of language innovation in this study.

a) Language Absorption (Inga Hennecke & Evelyn Wiesinger, 2023) explains how English words are adopted into Indonesian digital communication, often with phonological or morphological adaptation (e.g., *nge-like*, *nge-post*).

b) Word Formation (Bauer, 1983; Plag, 2003) describes how Gen Z generates new words through creative mechanisms such as blending (*bucin* from *budak cinta*), clipping (*info* from *information*), or acronyms (*OTW* – on the way).

3. Sociocultural Mediators (Identity, Community, and Accommodation)

The central part of the model shows mediating sociocultural factors that influence how and why linguistic innovation occur.

a) Digital Identity and Community (Crystal, 2001; Gentina, 2020) describe how Generation Z uses language to express individuality, humor, and belonging. Slang and neologisms are not just tools of communication but also symbols of group identity and digital culture.

b) Communication—Accommodation (Giles, 2008) explains the adaptive nature of Gen Z's language use. Users modify their language—by using slang, code-switching, or abbreviations—to align with the norms of particular online groups or audiences, thereby gaining acceptance and social rapport.

4. Linguistic Outcomes: Innovation and Identity

At the bottom of the model are the outcomes, which are observable linguistic and social effects resulting from these interactions:

a) Neologisms and Hybrid Lexicon: the emergence of new and mixed linguistic forms (e.g., *gabut*, *mager*, *santuy*)

b) Code-Mixing and Stylistic Innovation: frequent alternation between languages or creative alterations in spelling and structure to fit digital norms.

- c) **Providing convenience** to educators for Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in practical factor.

I. Previous Studies

The study entitled “Linguistic borrowing of English words and utterances among generation z Filipinos in cebuano visayan” written by April Jane G. (Zulianti et al.2022) using descriptive – qualitative method. The findings reveal that Generation Z speakers of Cebuano Visayan actively engage in **code-mixing and code-switching** with English, primarily on digital platforms, as a strategic and cognitively advanced linguistic behavior. Borrowed English words are used to enhance clarity, expressiveness, and social relevance, often undergoing phonological adaptation to fit Cebuano norms. Code-switching serves various pragmatic functions such as emphasis, emotional expression, and topic shifts, while maintaining grammatical accuracy in both codes. Rather than signaling linguistic deficiency, this bilingual practice reflects lexical economy, digital fluency, and identity formation, showcasing the speakers’ ability to navigate and manipulate two language systems effectively within diverse communicative contexts.

The second research research entitled “**Two Sided of TikTok: Considering Both Positive and Negative Sides of**

Social Media for Language Learning” written by Niswatin Nurul Hidayati (2022) using qualitative method. The research findings indicate that TikTok functions as an effective medium for language learning, particularly in enhancing students’ exposure to both Bahasa Indonesia as a mother tongue and English as a foreign language within online learning contexts. Its short-form, engaging content supports vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation practice, and contextual language use in a way that resonates with Generation Z learners. However, the study also highlights the necessity for parental and teacher supervision due to the potential negative impacts of excessive or inappropriate content exposure. As this research is based solely on secondary data, future studies are encouraged to incorporate a wider range of international sources and include primary data—such as user interviews or classroom observations—to provide a deeper understanding of TikTok’s educational value and risk.

Furthermore, research written by Syaputra et al. (2024) titled “The Use of Slang Language Style on Social Media Instagram By Gen-Z (Generation Z)” using qualitative approach. Abbreviations, in simple terms, are shortened letters or combinations of letters from a word or the result of many words, or shortening of one or more lexemes to create a new vocabulary. Abbreviations and shortening are examples of abbreviations

- 1) Abbreviated Form the result of shortening a word, usually from a first letter, is called an abbreviated form given the statement of Rosalina et al. (2020, p. 79) that abbreviations are formed from shortening words spelled from their own letters. (Rosmaria, 2024)
- 2) Form Of Shortening, shortening is a form of language used in everyday life. Quoting Rosalina et al. (2020, p. 79), shortening is a short term that can be found in various languages.
- 3) Inversion, inversion is a form of language whose use is reversed.
- 4) Foreign Language Forms, a foreign form of Indonesian, especially English, which is modified when used orally and in writing. Usually used to give a different or modern impression.
- 5) Forms Of Puns, the form of slang is a form of a word that is jettisoned so that the meaning of the pun changes from the original word. The form of puns in its use aims to refine the meaning.

Ramadhan, M. T., Sobarna, C., & Afsari, A. S. (2023) study, entitled “Campur Kode Bahasa Gaul dan Bahasa Sunda,” provides an in-depth sociolinguistic account of how Generation Z in Indonesia strategically manipulates linguistic resources in digital communication. Utilizing a qualitative

content analysis framework, the researchers systematically examined Instagram captions and Twitter (X) posts produced by Gen Z users to identify recurring patterns of code-mixing and lexical innovation. The findings reveal that Indonesian Gen Z speakers frequently integrate English lexical items into Indonesian syntactic structures, often within single clauses or phrases, resulting in hybrid forms such as *nge-share*, *di-mention*, and *overthinking-an*. These forms demonstrate the creative adaptation of English roots through Indonesian morphological processes, such as affixation, which reflects a high level of bilingual competence and morphological awareness.

More importantly, the study argues that such linguistic practices extend beyond mere communicative efficiency. Code-mixing and lexical innovation function as symbolic resources that index modernity, digital fluency, and in-group identity among Gen Z users. By blending Indonesian and English, speakers align themselves with globalized digital culture while simultaneously maintaining local linguistic identity. The study concludes that continuous exposure to bilingual digital environments—particularly social media platforms—facilitates the natural emergence of linguistic creativity, enabling Gen Z to construct flexible, hybrid identities. Consequently, this research strongly supports the current study by demonstrating that Gen Z's language use is

not random or deficient, but rather a socially meaningful and contextually motivated linguistic strategy shaped by globalization and digital communication practices.

Zhu and Jurgens' (2021) study offers a comprehensive examination of neologism formation within online youth communities, employing a corpus-based qualitative methodology to systematically analyze large-scale digital discourse. By examining linguistic data drawn from various social media platforms, the researchers identified recurring mechanisms of lexical innovation, particularly blending, abbreviation, and semantic shift. These processes reflect young users' tendency to creatively manipulate existing linguistic resources in response to rapidly evolving digital trends, viral memes, and dynamic peer interactions. The findings suggest that neologisms often emerge as context-specific expressions that gain meaning and relevance through repeated use within tightly knit online communities.

Furthermore, the study underscores the pivotal role of social media as a catalyst for accelerated language change. Digital platforms facilitate the swift circulation, normalization, and legitimization of newly coined lexical items, allowing them to move quickly from marginal usage to widespread acceptance. Zhu and Jurgens argue that this rapid diffusion reshapes traditional patterns of lexical evolution, which were previously constrained by slower, offline modes

of communication. As such, their research provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding how digitally mediated environments actively shape ongoing linguistic change, particularly among younger users who are both primary consumers and producers of online discourse. This perspective is highly relevant to the current study, as it situates youth-driven lexical innovation within broader processes of technological influence and sociocultural transformation.

Ramadhan, Sobarna, and Afsari (2023) investigate code mixing between slang and Sundanese in the TikTok account @dikingo6. Using a qualitative descriptive method, the study analyzes the linguistic forms and types of code mixing found in the creator's conversations. The findings reveal two main forms: word-level mixing—including acronyms, abbreviations, basic words, morphological interference, nonstandard words, contractions, lexeme blends, and morphophonemic forms—and phrase-level mixing. The study also identifies inward code mixing involving Sundanese, Indonesian, and Javanese, as well as outward code mixing involving Sundanese, English, and Mandarin, showing how TikTok users combine regional, national, foreign, and slang expressions in everyday digital communication.

Wadeea's (2024) study investigates the relationship between digital slang and identity construction among Generation Z by analyzing naturally occurring discourse from TikTok comment sections and WhatsApp conversations. Adopting a qualitative discourse-analytic approach, the research demonstrates that Gen Z users do not merely borrow English lexical items in their original forms, but actively modify and localize them to conform to the phonological, morphological, and pragmatic norms of their native languages. This process highlights language absorption as a dynamic, adaptive, and creative phenomenon rather than a passive act of linguistic borrowing.

Several previous studies have examined code-switching and code-mixing among Indonesian Generation Z users on social media. Kandiawan (2023) found that Gen Z Indonesians switch between Indonesian, regional languages, and English and use slang for social, practical, referential, and affective purposes, although this practice may also pose risks to standard Indonesian use. Tarihoran et al. (2022) showed that social media significantly influences the mixing of Indonesian and English among Generation Z, particularly because of communication habits and bilingual interaction. Zebua et al. (2024) analyzed Indonesian–English code-mixing in Instagram posts, captions, and comments, focusing on its linguistic patterns and the social, cultural, and psychological

factors behind users' language choices. Putri and Sulistiyono (2023) investigated code-switching, code-mixing, and slang in TikTok comment sections and emphasized their potential use as teaching materials for advertising texts, slogans, and posters. Similarly, Mufarrokha (2024) identified insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization in Oza Rangkuti's TikTok content, motivated by specific topics, quotations, and group identity. Finally, Amani et al. (2025) found that Indonesian creators' Korean-learning TikTok videos commonly contain word- and clause-level code-mixing, influenced by speech variety, communicative purpose, interlocutor, and topic. Overall, these studies demonstrate that code-switching and code-mixing on social media function not only as linguistic choices but also as tools for identity construction, social interaction, self-expression, and language learning.

The findings further indicate that linguistic innovation functions as a crucial communicative resource in online interaction. Modified slang expressions are strategically employed to convey humor, intensify emotional expression, and signal social alignment within peer groups. Through these practices, Gen Z speakers negotiate interpersonal relationships and construct shared identities in digitally mediated spaces. Wadea concludes that digital slang operates simultaneously as a linguistic and social tool,

enabling young users to assert group membership and cultural relevance. This study thus contributes to a broader understanding of how digital communication environments foster continuous linguistic creativity and identity performance among Generation Z, reinforcing the view that language innovation is deeply embedded in social and interactional contexts.

J. Research Novelty

The novelty of this study focused in its specific focus on the relationship between language absorption and word formation in Generation Z's social media communication. While previous studies have examined code-mixing, neologisms, digital slang, and language innovation among Generation Z, this study specifically investigates how English lexical items are absorbed, morphologically adapted, and developed through various word formation processes in digital communication.

Therefore, this study offers a more detailed linguistic perspective by identifying the forms, processes, and patterns of language absorption and word formation used by Generation Z on social media. The novelty also lies in examining how borrowed English lexical items are not only adopted but also adapted and transformed into new linguistic

forms according to the communicative practices of Generation Z.

1. Similarities

This study shares similarities with previous studies because they all focus on language use among Generation Z, particularly in digital or online contexts. Generation Z is chosen as the research subject because of their active engagement with social media and their role in shaping contemporary language trends.

Second, both this study and previous studies examine language phenomena occurring on social media platforms. The data sources include captions, comments, and online interactions that naturally reflect linguistic practices in digital communication.

Third, in terms of methodology, this study and previous studies employ a qualitative or descriptive qualitative research approach. This approach is used to analyze linguistic data in depth and to understand patterns of language use rather than to measure them statistically.

Lastly, this study and previous studies discuss English influence on language use, such as borrowing, code-mixing, slang, or other forms of language adaptation in digital communication.

2. Novelty

The first novelty of this study lies in its specific focus on **language absorption and word formation processes**. Unlike previous studies that mainly focus on code-mixing, code-switching, slang usage, language style, or the role of social media in language learning, this study examines how these linguistic processes contribute to the development of new forms in Generation Z's digital communication.

Second, this study offers novelty in its object of analysis. While previous studies generally analyze slang expressions or bilingual language practices, this study examines how borrowed English words are morphologically formed through processes such as derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronym formation, and neologism.

Third, this study provides a broader perspective through its multiple social media platforms. While some previous studies focus on a single platform, such as TikTok or Instagram, this study examines language use across multiple social media platforms, providing a broader understanding of language absorption and word formation among Generation Z.

Finally, the novelty of this research lies in its objective of identifying and analyzing the forms, processes, and patterns of language absorption and word formation used by Generation Z in digital communication. Thus, this study provides a more comprehensive linguistic description of how

English vocabulary is absorbed and transformed into new expressions within contemporary social media communication.

