

## Analysis of Adolescents' Ability to use Standard Language in Daily Activities

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### ABSTRACT

The diversity of language use in the surrounding environment reflects the richness of the Indonesian nation in terms of language and culture. The diversity of languages spread across various regions demonstrates that language is a vital part of a nation's identity. This research uses a literature review method, an approach that focuses on collecting, analyzing, and summarizing the results of previous research and expert opinions on the topic under study. The results show that language plays a crucial role in national identity and as a form of respect for the country. The younger generation should be able to maintain and uphold the Indonesian language as a manifestation of love and devotion to the homeland. However, in reality, the use of non-standard language is increasingly common in everyday life and is even considered commonplace. The influence of foreign languages and the flow of modernization are among the factors causing the emergence of slang among teenagers. This phenomenon is slowly shifting the position of standard Indonesian, whose sustainability should be maintained.

**Keyword:** Analysis; Language; Standard; Adolescent Ability

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language serves as the primary means for humans to interact and communicate. Without language, communication would be impossible. Through language, a person can convey their thoughts, ideas, and feelings to others. Language also serves as a medium for self-expression and social relationships.

As Crystal (Ariesta et al., 2021) points out, language's primary function is as a communication tool, conveying messages to others. Furthermore, language is also used to express emotions, influence others, support social interactions, control the environment, record information, and facilitate thought processes.

In social life, the use of Indonesian is crucial because it serves as a means of communication between individuals from various regions and ethnic backgrounds. This is especially true for adolescents and adults who frequently interact in various environments such as schools, universities, workplaces, and other public spaces. However, in reality, there is still widespread use of language that does not comply with rules or is non-standard (Rahmadhani & Syaputra, 2022). This situation can lead to misunderstandings in communication if the other person doesn't understand the terms used. Therefore, it is important for people to get used to using standard words to ensure smooth communication and maintain language's function as a unifying tool for the nation.

The Indonesian language itself is a symbol of national unity, born from the Indonesian homeland (Syahputra et al., 2022). Its existence holds a crucial position as the official language of the country. Therefore, the use of Indonesian must adhere to established rules, such as the general guidelines for Indonesian spelling (Hadi, 2019). Previously, this language was known as Malay (Nurmayasari, 2025). Due to its ease of understanding and long-standing use by people in various regions, Malay was later adopted as a unifying language and officially recognized as Indonesian through the Youth Pledge on October 28, 1928.

Indonesian holds a crucial position, including as a national language that reflects socio-cultural values and fosters a sense of nationalism. As a unifying language, Indonesian must be used properly and correctly, in accordance with applicable rules and spelling. Standard words are words whose spelling follows established language rules and guidelines.

The role of language is also very interesting to study in the context of language acquisition in children. Language acquisition is a natural process that occurs from birth, in which children acquire language skills without formal learning. Through this process, children begin to understand and use their first language as a means of communicating and interacting with their surroundings. The study of language acquisition is important because it demonstrates how language plays a significant role in the development of human cognitive and social abilities from an early age.

This research focuses on the use of standard language among the younger generation, with the aim of determining to what extent teenagers in the era of technological advancement still maintain the use of standard language in everyday communication. The formulation of the problem in this research is: (1) what forms of standard language use among the younger generation, (2) what factors influence changes in the use of standard language, and (3) what efforts can be made to foster awareness of standard language in the digital era. This research is expected to contribute to efforts to preserve the Indonesian language so that it remains a strong, conservative, and relevant unifying language of the nation in the midst of globalization.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used was a literature review. This approach was chosen because the research is conceptual and descriptive, aiming to examine, collect, and summarize various previous research results and expert opinions relevant to the topic under study. According to Snyder (2019), a literature review plays a crucial role in building a theoretical foundation for scientific research and also helps identify knowledge gaps that can guide further research.

The literature review process in this study involved several systematic steps: (1) identifying the main topic and keywords according to the research focus, (2) searching for and collecting relevant scientific sources, (3) selecting literature that met the criteria, and (4) evaluating the content of the literature to obtain a meaningful synthesis. The sources used included national and international scientific journals, academic books, online scientific articles, and official publications from educational and language institutions.

To maintain the validity and currency of the information, the literature selection was limited to publications published between 2019 to 2025, except for classic references with important historical or conceptual value, such as basic theories on language function and language acquisition. The criteria for selecting literature included: (a) relevance to the topic of standard language use and the development of the Indonesian language, (b) the academic quality of the sources (based on empirical research or recognized theory), and (c) the credibility of the publisher (reputable journal or academic publisher).

Through this method, researchers strive to present a comprehensive analysis of various perspectives, theories, and related research findings, resulting in a deep and focused understanding of the issue of standard language use among the younger generation.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Language is an inseparable part of human life. Through language, a person can convey ideas, thoughts, and desires when trying to share opinions or information with others. Language serves as a means of social interaction used by all levels of society. Language is not individual, as its use is only effective if the speaker and the interlocutor can mutually understand the intended meaning.

According to Gorys Keraf, there are four main functions of language. Language serves as a medium of self-expression when a person wants to express their feelings and demonstrate their presence in society. Language also serves as a means of communication, enabling a person to convey what they know, feel, and think. Language functions as a tool for social integration and adaptation because through language, a person can learn about customs, behavior, and etiquette, enabling them to adapt to their environment. Language also functions as a tool of social control, used to influence the views and attitudes of others.

Indonesian is the official language of the Indonesian nation and is used as a means of communication and a symbol of unity. Indonesian has standard rules and guidelines that must be applied in its use. The status of Indonesian as the national language was formalized on August 18, 1945, and is stipulated in Chapter XV, Article 36 of the 1945 Constitution, which affirms that the national language is Indonesian.

The functions of Indonesian as the national language include serving as the official language of the state, the language of instruction in education, a unifying tool at the national level, and a tool for the development of science and technology. The Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) serves as the primary reference for proper and correct language use. It was compiled by the Language Development and Fostering Agency and published by Balai Pustaka as a guideline for standardizing the Indonesian language.

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), language can generally be defined as a system of sound symbols used by humans to communicate. Terminologically, language is a communication tool in the form of a series of symbols or signs produced through the human speech organs. Pateda (1987:4) explains that language is a means of conveying one person's feelings, thoughts, and knowledge to others. Through language, humans can collaborate in their social lives. This demonstrates that humans, as social beings, need language to interact and fulfill their needs.

Standard Indonesian is a language whose use conforms to applicable rules or norms. Generally, standard Indonesian is used in formal contexts, both orally and in writing. Standard Indonesian is derived from the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI) and follows the General Guidelines for Indonesian Spelling (PUEBI) and established grammar. Pangabean argues that language is a system that functions to express and record activity in the human nervous system. Sementara itu, Dalimunthe (2024) explains that language is a means of spiritual communication that plays an important role in communal life. From these various opinions, it can be concluded that language is a tool used by humans to communicate with each other and exchange information.

Standard Indonesian can be understood as a language variety whose use follows official linguistic rules. According to Ningrum (2019), standard Indonesian is the language used by someone, both orally and in writing, based on official guidelines. These standard rules include the General Guidelines for Indonesian Spelling (PUEBI), standard grammar, and references found in dictionaries. This language variety is usually used in formal situations such as official activities, official correspondence, legal documents, scientific works, research reports, and so on.

Standard language has several key characteristics. First, both spoken and written, standard language is used in formal contexts and does not contain any regional dialects or accents. Second, its use follows the rules established in the Indonesian Language and Culture Standards (PUEBI). Third, standard language has a complete grammatical structure, clearly defining a subject, predicate, and object (Ramaniyar & Alimin, 2019). The standardity of a word can be assessed from its pronunciation, spelling, grammar, and level of Indonesian-ness (Dalimunthe, 2024).

In contrast to standard language, non-standard language is a language variety that does not follow official rules and is typically used in casual or informal situations. This language often appears in everyday conversation—for example, when talking with friends, family, at the market, or in personal writing such as diaries. Non-standard language is identical to spoken language used in everyday social life. The primary function of non-standard language is to create familiarity, warmth, and comfort in communication. The characteristics of non-standard language include having a different form from standard language but the meaning remains the same, being influenced by developments over time, being influenced by foreign languages, and being used in relaxed or informal communication contexts.

There are several definitions of standard language, namely:

1. Suharianto (1981) explains that non-standard language is a language variety that continues to be used and develops according to its function. This language variety emerges in informal or casual communication situations.
2. Alwasilah (1985) states that non-standard language is a form of language that uses words, phrases, sentence structures, spelling, and pronunciation that differ from the language commonly used by educated people or formal language users.
3. Richards et al. (2014) argue that non-standard language is a form of language used in conversation and writing that differs in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary compared to standard language.

Based on the previous opinions, it can be concluded that informal language is a form of language variation that has a different code or linguistic system than formal language. This variety is generally used in informal or casual communication situations. Both formal and informal language are used by society, but their contexts and functions vary depending on communication needs (Arisetya, 2025).

With the passage of time, particularly in Indonesia, the influence of slang on Indonesian grammar is increasingly evident. This phenomenon indicates that the widespread use of slang among the public has impacted the preservation of Indonesian as a national identity. If this trend continues without collective awareness, Indonesian's position as the unifying language could be displaced by ephemeral popular languages. Therefore, it is important for the younger generation to understand that the use of formal language is not merely a formality, but rather a form of respect for the national language.

In everyday life, the use of formal language among adolescents shows a declining trend, particularly in informal communication such as social media, instant messaging, and face-to-face conversations. A study

(Iswatiningsih & Pangesti, 2021) shows that adolescents increasingly use informal language in online communication, for example, using words like "gak" (no), "gue" (me), "lo" (you), and "kayak itu" (like that). This form of language emerges due to the influence of their social environment and social media interaction habits, which tend to be relaxed and expressive.

A similar phenomenon is also seen on platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and X (Twitter), where adolescents often use a mixture of Indonesian and foreign languages (code-mixing and code-switching), for example: "I'm really insecure today," "You're really emotional," or "My mood's been ruined because of my homework." According to Ramli (2025), this code-mixing pattern illustrates adolescents' linguistic flexibility but also indicates a weak application of formal language in formal contexts.

Azzahra et al. (2024) noted that the use of slang among teenagers is not only a form of expression of group identity but also a reflection of adaptation to a rapidly changing digital culture. For example, terms like "healing," "cringe," "vibes," or "gaskeun" have become more popular parts of everyday vocabulary than their standard language equivalents, such as "menyembuhkan diri," "malu," "suasana," and "ayo lanjut."

This trend indicates that teenagers' ability to use standard language tends to decline in informal communication contexts, although some are still able to adapt their language style when in academic or formal situations. This phenomenon is important to analyze further because it reflects the socio-cultural dynamics of today's youth and poses a challenge for Indonesian language education to instill awareness of good and correct language in the digital era (Ridwan, 2025).

In research on formal language use among adolescents, several indicators are used to measure the success of language learning or intervention. These criteria are formulated so that research results can be assessed objectively and systematically. These include:

1. Improved Standard Language Skills

Research is considered successful if there is an increase in adolescents' ability to understand and apply vocabulary and standard language structures after receiving specific instruction. This improvement can be seen through test results, direct observation, or analysis of written work. For example, if at least 80% of participants are able to use standard language with a "good" or "very good" score, then the program can be considered successful.

2. Effectiveness Assessment Scale Criteria

The effectiveness of standard language learning can be measured through the percentage of achievement with the following categories:

- a. 81%–100%: Very effective
- b. 61%–80%: Effective
- c. 41%–60%: Quite effective
- d. 21%–40%: Less effective
- e. <20%: Ineffective

This assessment is generally based on test results, observations, and questionnaires regarding the standard language skills of the study participants.

3. Individual and Group Minimum Completion Standards (KKM)

Minimum completion standards are often used as a benchmark for success. Students are considered successful if they achieve or exceed a predetermined score, for example, a minimum of 70 on a scale of 100.

4. Specific Indicators of Standard Language

One of the main indicators of success is how frequently adolescents use standard words or sentences and minimize the use of non-standard forms. For example, students are considered successful if they can consistently write 7–10 sentences using standard vocabulary.

5. Assessment Instruments Used

Assessments are usually conducted using several instruments, such as:

- a. Objective tests on the differences between standard and non-standard words
- b. Performance assessments through writing expository texts, reports, or memos using standard language
- c. Observation sheets on language habits in daily interactions
- d. Questionnaires on attitudes and language habits to measure participants' linguistic awareness

#### 6. Instrument Validity and Reliability

Each assessment instrument needs to be tested through content and construct validity to ensure accurate results. Reliability can be measured using statistical analysis such as Cronbach's Alpha, KR-20, or point-biserial correlation to ensure data consistency.

In general, indicators of successful use of standard language can be seen from the increase in average language proficiency scores, the number of students achieving minimum mastery, and the validity and reliability of the instruments used in the research. Success can also be measured by the percentage of participants showing positive changes—for example, more than 80% using standard language in their communication or writing.

The phenomenon of slang use among the public, especially the younger generation, is now increasingly widespread. Ironically, young people are the primary users of slang because it is considered more modern and in keeping with their lifestyle. Many teenagers believe that good and correct Indonesian is too stiff and irrelevant to everyday conversation. However, excessive use of slang can erode pride in Indonesian as a symbol of national identity. Therefore, it is crucial for the public to revitalize love for the national language through education, media, and consistent language policies (Syahputra et al., 2022).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

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