

## Language Variations of Adolescents on TikTok Social Media

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History	Abstract
<b>Received</b> <b>31 March 2024</b>	<p>The use of language on social media which tends to adjust its pronunciation has given rise to a phenomenon called ecrononciation. This phenomenon has been happening in Indonesia for a long time, especially among teenagers. This causes the emergence of new language variations that displace old language variations over time. Therefore, this research aims to describe the differences in language variations of teenagers on social media, the function of language variations used by teenagers on social media, and the background that causes language variations of teenagers on social media. The method used in this research is a qualitative descriptive method. Data collection was carried out through listening and note-taking techniques sourced from videos uploaded by one of the TikTok social media user accounts. The data used in this research are oral statements accompanied by written transcripts uploaded by the account. The data that has been collected is identified and analyzed using the matching method based on the theory of language variation in sociolinguistic studies. Based on the results and discussion in this research, it was found that there are forms of adolescent language variation in the form of new forms, the emotive function of adolescent language variations on social media, and the background of adolescent language variations from time to time is influenced by speech situations and age factors.</p>
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## INTRODUCTION

Language plays an important role in all aspects of our daily lives. It acts as media for people to communicate with each other and express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas (Nisa et al., 2020). Along with the development of technology, social media is present as a place for its users to interact and stay connected online (Najib, 2014). Furthermore, social media also allows people to create content thanks to the mobility, availability, and flexibility of their mobile devices (Kaplan & Haenlein through Al Arif, 2019; El Hariry through Nuraeni & Nurmalia, 2020). Social media has become a basic need for some people, and it will feel strange if you don't use this information-sharing site for even a day. Nowadays, most Indonesians use frequently social media such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. However, they also recently began to use a music video platform named TikTok. This application allows its user to express themselves through their self-made short music videos. In this case, language remains as primary tool to maintain communication among social media users.

Apart from being able to perform long-distance communication, social media can also be a forum or medium for people who don't know each other to be able to communicate continuously. However, because of the exposure of social media, Indonesian citizens tend to use foreign languages in their daily conversation, especially the languages of adolescents on social media which vary over time and change a lot compared to standard Indonesian. According to (Sumarsono, & Partana, 2007), adolescence is the most interesting period viewed from a developmental perspective. Generally, early adolescence begins at the age of 10-13 years, then mid-adolescence at the age of 14-17 years, while 18 years and above is the period from late adolescence to adulthood. This period is mainly identical to the characteristics such as adventure, grouping, and "delinquency" represented by the languages they use. The usage of standard grammar is yet ruled out in the phenomenon of language shift and change in this social media (Syahputra & Kartolo, 2023). There are many new vocabularies and language changes including sound, word form, sentence, and meaning. This kind of language is called slang which is normally used in informal situations by teenagers (Junadi & Laili, 2021).

When language users use social media as a communication tool, they tend to write the words as it is pronounced. Nasrullah through Kencana (2017) mentioned that two terms can be used to describe the languages in the cyber media, i.e., Netspeak and Netlingo. Netspeak can be used to describe a speech that appears to be written, whereas Netlingo is the standard text language created as text language which can seem to represent expressions in conversation. Junus (2015) used the term *ecrononciation* to describe the phenomenon when a language user on social media writes a language expression as it is pronounced. This term is a French portmanteau word (*mots-valise*) which comes from *écrire* (to write) and *pronunciation* (pronunciation).

According to Junus (2015), *ecrononciation* refers to word, phrase, and clause writing instead of the sentence structure. This phenomenon shows the linguistical change later gives rise to distinctive language variations, such as zeroization which consists of apheresis (omission of the first sound or syllable of a word, e.g., *kan* from *bukan* 'not' or *akan* 'will'), syncope (omission of the middle sound or syllable of a word, e.g., *tidak* becomes *tak* 'no'), and apocope (omission of the final sound or syllable of a word, e.g., *pul* from *pulang* 'back to home'); diphthongization e.g., *kalo* from *kalau* 'if'; addition of [k] to make glottal sound e.g., *pulak* from *pula* 'also'; letter writing changes e.g., *u* becomes *o*, *i* becomes *e*, *k* becomes *gh*, *s* becomes *z*, and *f* becomes *p*; lexical changes e.g., *serius* 'serious' becomes *ciyus*; and abbreviation e.g., *mager* which stands for *malas gerak* 'don't want to move'.

On the other hand, Junus (2015) also mentioned other language variations that are not included in *ecrononciation*, but appeared and were frequently used by social media users, namely lexical changes (e.g., *banget* 'very' becomes *beud*); semantic changes; abbreviation (e.g., *mkn* from *makan* 'eat', *kt* from *kita* 'we'); use of letter symbols (e.g., *you* becomes *u*, *aku* 'I' becomes *aq*);



use of the number to replace letter (e.g., se7 from setuju 'agree'); and ellipsis i.e. omission of a constituent in a sentence. The language variations in daily conversation are mainly affected by social media. Moreover, most of the TikTok social media users use language variations as spoken language in their videos.

Saussure through Junus (2015) stated that the language continues to develop so that it is a dynamic structure instead of static. In this case, language continues to change and develop in line with changes that occur in its users and in the context of language use itself. The ever-advancing development of technology has also changed the form or type of human communication today. Watt (2010) in his research entitled "How does the use of Modern Communication Technology Influence Language and Literacy Development" quoted from Crystal, explained that this new era is known as the era of written speech or also known as written conversation, and the era of spoken writing or the era of conversational writing. It shows that communication by utilizing advances in internet technology is an activity that is no longer inevitable, especially for the younger generation today, which in turn also affects their writing and reading culture (Junus, 2015).

Trask (2000) explained that language is constantly changing. New vocabulary on social media appears to maintain the language itself "up to date" (Hudaa & Bahtiar, 2020), thus which is why language always develops and varies. According to Nuryani et al. through Afdhaliyah and Haq (2021), language variation is a change or difference occurring in a language system due to certain factors that still refer to linguistic rules. Meanwhile, Wijana (2020) defined language variation as a set of human speech patterns or linguistic items that have distinctive properties and can be uniquely linked to factors external to language, e.g., social status, origin, gender, age, or specific situation in the enunciation. Furthermore, based on its level, language variation can be classified into phonological variation, grammatical variation, and lexical variation. Besides that, diverse social interactions can lead to linguistic diversity (Chaer & Agustina, 2010).

The language variations also create variations in the language that are defined by different terms, such as dialect (related to geographical location), sociolect (related to the social group); functionolect (related to speech situations and/or formality level); and the others (related to development of time), or if these differences can still be considered as varieties within one language, they are analogously called chronolect (Nababan, 1986).

Jakobson et al. through Ardhana et al. (2021), stated that language contains: personal functions from the perspective of its speakers; directive functions from the perspective of its listener to control their behavior; phatic functions between speaker and their interlocutor to establish or maintain relationships, show a sense of camaraderie, or social solidarity. Related to the speech topic, language contains referential functions to talk about an object or an event. From the code aspect, language contains metalingual or metalinguistic functions (talk about the language itself). Lastly, based on the address aspect, language contains imaginative functions to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings.

According to Nababan through Ardhana et al. (2021), language variation is divided into two parts according to its factors of occurrence, namely internal variation and external variation. Internal language variation arises from factors within the language itself, i.e., phonological level, morphological level, and syntactic level. At the same time, external language variation refers to the origin of the speakers, social group, speech situation, and the period or era of language use.

The studies about language variations in social media were previously carried out by Chinita (2020), Andriyana et al. (2021), and Ardhana et al. (2021). The study from Chinita (2020) described the language variations used by high school students who use Instagram. This study is descriptive qualitative research and uses Instagram status written by high school students as its data. The results of this study found that high school students use language variations based on its formality and it is included in casual style. Meanwhile, the study from Andriyana et al. (2021). described the colloquial language variations on TikTok among teenagers in Indonesia through eth-



nolinguistic studies. The results showed that colloquial language variations are found in the form of onomatopoeia, pronouns, and sentences. The last is the study from Ardhana et al. (2021) about the form, function, and background of language variations that occurred in Twitter social media.

Based on the previous studies mentioned above, it is found that there are still not many studies on language variations of adolescents on social media. Therefore, this study intends to 1) describe the form differences of the language variations of adolescents over time; 2) describe the functions of the language variations of adolescents; and 3) describe the factors that cause the language variations of adolescents. The results of this study focus on the language variations of adolescents over time in the data found on TikTok social media. Hopefully, future researchers will be able to develop this study by linking language variations of adolescents on social media with other fields of sociolinguistics.

## **METHOD**

This study was conducted at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada in June 2023. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. According to Soebroto (2007), descriptive research has the characteristic of describing or describing linguistic facts and symptoms as they exist. Meanwhile, qualitative research is said to try to understand the meaning and phenomena or an event and its relationship to the society being studied in the actual context and circumstances (Soebroto, 2007). This method is suitable for describing the data obtained in this research. The data used in this study is words or sentences collected from social media, while the data source was obtained from short videos uploaded by a TikTok user named Athar Alikhwan. His videos were chosen as the research data source because they show a phenomenon of change or variation in the language used by teenagers to communicate from time to time. Short videos uploaded by this account are obtained based on empirical experience from video uploaders.

This study is focused on video uploads from the account Athar Alikhwan which contain oral speech accompanied by written transcripts. Scrutinizing and note-taking methods are used as the data collection method. This study uses a scrutinizing method since scrutinization of language use is required to collect the data (Sudaryanto, 2015). Then proceed with the note-taking technique to write the data that has been found. In this step, we watched and listened to the video uploaded on social media, then wrote the transcription text which will be used as data in this study.

The data are analyzed using the identity method with the determinant element sorting technique (Pilah Unsur Penentu or PUP). This technique is used to sort the linguistic units being analyzed. Through this technique, researchers sorted and processed data in the form of utterances from Athar Alikhwan's account which had been transcribed to be grouped based on form and function. This method is also used to determine the factors causing language variations on TikTok social media. Sociolinguistic studies are used as a foundation for analyzing data. Nababan through Chinita (2020) mentions the things discussed in sociolinguistics, i.e., studies in social and cultural contexts; the relationship between linguistic factors, characteristics, and language variations with social and cultural situations and factors; and the study of social functions in language use in society. This method and techniques are used to find the forms and factors that cause variations in adolescent's language used on social media, especially TikTok.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In the short videos uploaded by TikTok user Athar Alikhwan, we found language variations phenomenon over time used by teenagers in communication. Athar Alikhwan himself is a content creator and used to be a radio broadcaster at a famous private radio station in Yogyakarta. The sentences contained in short video uploads that are used as the data of this study are acquired from his own real experience. The language variations that appeared in his uploaded videos can be described as follows.



## Form of Language Variations

Table 1. Language variations based on the new form.

Standard language (1990)	Language variations of Adolescents (2020)
Apakah kau tidak bisa mendengar perkataan-ku?	Woy!
Wah, kau hebat ya	Anjayy
Aku masih di rumah. Tunggu sebentar ya. Secepatnya aku akan menuju ke tempatmu.	OTW, Bro.

From the table above, it can be seen the language variations that were used by teenagers in 1990 and the other ones that appeared in 2020. The form of language variations of adolescents of both periods are very obvious. The declarative, interrogative, and compliment expressions in the 2020s are shortened significantly compared to those of 1990.

For example, the expression used to confirm an interlocutor in *Apakah kau tidak bisa mendengar perkataanku?* 'Can't you hear what I just said?'. This sentence is categorized as the standard style in Indonesian which contains the interrogative sentence constituents that are in accordance with Indonesian standard grammar. It is still used nowadays to address an unfamiliar or older interlocutor. Meanwhile, the language of adolescents in 2020 is the slang language style because it tends to be used by teenagers on social media. The interjection *Woy!* is intended to confirm if the interlocutor can hear what the speaker said.

Besides, the word *Anjayy* which appeared as a new language variation of adolescents on social media intends to express a compliment from the speaker to their interlocutor. It is also found that English abbreviation appeared as a language variation of adolescents, namely in the word *OTW* which stands for on the way. Therefore, the word *otw* intends to explain that the speaker will immediately go to the location of their interlocutor.

Both *anjay* and *otw* are words that can only be understood by certain groups and are classified as slang language styles. In other words, there are several people who don't understand what the two words imply. These language variations are used in casual situations and are used by peer groups of teenagers who are already close friends.

## Function of Language Variations

Table 2. Language variations of adolescents as emotive function

Standard language (1990)	Language variations of Adolescents (2020)
Astaga. Seram sekali. Aku bahkan tak mampu melihatnya. Aku sangat takut.	Aaaaaa. TBL. TBL. TBL. Takut banget loh.

The different language variations in 1990 and 2020 are very apparent in the data table above. People in 1990 still used formal language style, whereas language variation that appeared in 2020 is the slang variation, i.e., *TBL* which is used to express the feeling of fear of the speaker. This language variation is more expressive when it is used in an enunciation and is already understood by TikTok users who are mostly teenagers.





**Factors Causing Language Variation*****Internal Factors***

Table 3. Variations in the form of apheresis

<b>Standard Language (1980)</b>	<b>Language Variation of Adolescent (2000)</b>	<b>Language Variation of Adolescent (2020)</b>
Kamukenapa?	Eh, kenapa?	Napa?

The data above shows the different language variations in a certain period. The first one (1980) still uses the standard style, while with language variation in 2000, the pronoun 'you' is replaced by the particle *eh* showing the feeling of surprise, so stressing is required in its pronunciation. In the language variation in 2020, the colloquial variation appeared with the apheresis process, i.e., a phonological process in which a sound or syllable at the beginning of the word is omitted (Muslich through Ummah, 2021; Rizqi & Widayati, 2021). The word *napa* comes from *kenapa* 'why' with the omission of phonemes /k/ and /e/.

Table 4. Variations in form of affixation process

<b>Standard Language (1980)</b>	<b>Language Variation of Adolescent (2000)</b>	<b>Language Variation of Adolescent (2010)</b>	<b>Language Variation of Adolescent (2020)</b>
Ayo merokok terlebih dahulu.	Ayo ngerokok dulu.	Sebats dulu lah.	Sebats duls.

Language variation of adolescents in *ngerokok* appeared in the 2000s. This word comes from the basic word *rokok* 'cigarette' which is a noun. The word then undergoes an affixation process with the prefix *nge-* which can be likened to the prefix *meN-* in its formal style. According to morphological rules, if the prefix *meN-* is combined with a noun, it will make a derived word that means "to do something" (Kridalaksana, 2009). Therefore, the word *ngerokok* means "to do something related to a cigarette" (smoking).

Furthermore, as time goes by, the use of words in the youth language variations is replaced by new variations, i.e., *sebats*. This word is derived from the word *batang* 'a (single bar)' which then experiences the removal of the last element in the word. The process of removing one or more phonemes at the end of a word is called *apokop* (Keraf, 1991; Sitompul, 2019). After experiencing the removal of the last element, namely the element *ang*, the word *batang* becomes *bat* and gets the addition of the morpheme *se-* 'a/one' in front. So, variations of the word *sebats* have the intention of "finish a single bar of cigarette" (smoking).

***External Factors***

The external factor that most affects the occurrence of language variation on TikTok is as follows.



Table 5. Language variations based on speech situation

Standard Language (1990)	Language Variation of Adolescent (2000)	Language Variation of Adolescent (2010)	Language Variation of Adolescent (2020)
Ayo kita bertemu.	Ayuk nongkrong, yuk.	Nongki lah kita.	Nongki, yuk.

The speech situation on social media is informal and is not regulated by certain kinds of grammatical rules. For example, in the data above, a language variation of adolescents occurs in an invitation that begins with *ayo kita bertemu* 'let's meet'. A new language variation later appears and is used by teenagers with the words *nongkrong* and *nongki* 'hang out'. Since both words appear frequently and are being used in daily life, they were eventually adopted in the standard Indonesian style and are inputted in the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* and have the meaning of 'hanging out' or 'gathering with friends'. Both *nongkrong* and *nongki* are included as language variations of adolescents who intend to invite their interlocutor to meet or gather. However, the use of these two words must be adapted to the speech situation. It is impossible to invite someone with those words if the speaker is either not close to or younger than their interlocutor. Hence, the words *nongkrong* and *nongki* are generally used by groups of teenagers who are already familiar with each other.

Table 6. Language variations based on the age of speakers

Standard language (1980)	Language Variation of Adolescent (2000)	Language Variation of Adolescent (2010)	Language Variation of Adolescent (2020)
Apapun yang terjadi, kita harus semangat.	Ayo semangat!	Cemungudh!	Mangats, Bro!

Most TikTok users are teenagers, so they tend to express their creativity by creating variations in their language. It can be seen from the data above, that language variations appear among teenagers to replace the word *semangat* 'fighting'. In 2010 and 2020s, the word *semangat* varies as *cemungudh* and *mangats*. These two language variations intend to encourage their interlocutor. However, the speaker must pay attention to the speech situation so that they can encourage their interlocutor with the appropriate expression. As well as the data in table 5, data in table 6 are mostly affected by the closeness and age differences between the speaker and interlocutor.

The results of this study are also in line with previous studies carried out by Chinita (2020), Andriyana et al. (2021), and Ardhana et al. (2021). Besides, the discussion already answered researchers' questions regarding the form of differences in language variations of adolescents on social media over time, the function of the language variations, and the factors causing the language variations on social media. The language variation used by teenagers on TikTok over time appears as a casual style that can be used in non-formal situations.

Research has found that the language used from 1980 to 2020 continues to experience changes or variations. In terms of formality, the language used by teenagers in 1980 - 1990 was still dominated by standard vocabulary. However, the more you get here, the language used is simpler or more relaxed and creates more familiarity between the speaker and his speech partner. However, such language variations are more suitable for communicating with familiar friends or family. Not suitable for use to communicate in official situations. This is in line with research conducted by Wati et al. (2020) because his research also discusses language variations among migrant students at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Mulawarman University.

Apart from the speech situation, which influences the formality of a language used in communication, there are still several other factors behind language variations. These factors include age, education, gender, profession, level of nobility, and economic level (Nugrawiyati, 2020). Howev-



er, in this study, the more prominent factor was age as the background for language variation.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Sociolinguistics is a field of study that connects linguistic studies with factors that exist in society. Sociolinguistic studies are used in this study to examine the forms of language variation used by adolescents on social media, especially based on data found on TikTok over time. The language variations found in TikTok social media appeared as variations in the use of the Indonesian language by adolescents which change over time. The data used for this study are videos uploaded by Athar Alikhwan on TikTok containing language variations from 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2020 until it eventually became a language that is still used by teenagers today as slang. These languages can also be found in teenagers' daily conversations. This research finds forms of language variation based on new forms. These language variations have an emotive function, that is, they are more expressive when used in a speech. Then, based on the background, the language variations found are influenced by internal language factors and external factors (speech situation and age).

This study hopefully can enhance insight and become a reference source of learning for readers. The analysis of language variations in social media in this study needs to be further developed since it only focuses on the relationship between language and age. Therefore, future researchers are expected to be able to explain further the language variations and their relationship with other social factors.

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