

## The Effect of Using English on the Erosion of Indonesian as a Lingua Franca

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### ABSTRACT

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*This research aims to determine the influence of the use of English as a language of daily communication on the erosion of Indonesian as a lingua franca, by considering various sociolinguistic and cultural factors. Indonesian is the national language used by Indonesian people to this day. However, the use of Indonesian seems to be starting to be eroded by the use of English which is recently frequently used, especially by teenagers. This raises growing concerns about its potential impact on the erosion of Indonesian, the lingua franca. This study involves the theory of extensive utilization of the English language in various fields and its current status as a global or international language. The method used in this research was descriptive qualitative. Qualitative data were collected through surveys, online forms, and focus group discussions with individuals representing different linguistic backgrounds and levels of English proficiency. The results of this research showed that 96.2% of respondents always use English as their daily language in communication. Apart from that, the use of English had an impact on the use of Indonesian when having a conversation. Researchers also found that even though respondents knew Indonesian as a lingua franca, in fact they used English more by 51.9%. Therefore, this research also seeks to provide input for language planning and language policy making which aims to maintain the national language and preserve the role of Indonesian as an important communication tool in Indonesian society.*

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ABSTRAK

**Riwayat Artikel**

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**Kata Kunci**

Erosi;

Indonesia;

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Lingua Franca.

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengetahui pengaruh penggunaan bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa komunikasi sehari-hari terhadap terkikisnya bahasa Indonesia sebagai lingua franca, dengan mempertimbangkan berbagai faktor sosiolinguistik dan budaya. Bahasa Indonesia merupakan bahasa nasional yang digunakan oleh masyarakat Indonesia hingga saat ini. Namun demikian, penggunaan bahasa Indonesia nampaknya mulai terkikis oleh penggunaan bahasa Inggris yang akhir-akhir ini sering digunakan khususnya oleh para remaja. Hal ini menimbulkan kekhawatiran yang semakin besar mengenai potensi dampaknya terhadap terkikisnya bahasa Indonesia yang menjadi lingua franca. Kajian ini melibatkan teori pemanfaatan bahasa Inggris di berbagai bidang dan statusnya saat ini sebagai bahasa global atau internasional. Metode pada penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Data kualitatif dikumpulkan melalui survei, formulir online, dan diskusi kelompok terfokus dengan individu yang mewakili latar belakang linguistik dan tingkat kemahiran bahasa Inggris yang berbeda. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa sebanyak 96,2% responden senantiasa menggunakan bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa sehari-hari di dalam komunikasi. Selain itu, penggunaan bahasa Inggris berdampak pada penggunaan bahasa Indonesia pada saat melakukan percakapan. Peneliti juga menemukan bahwa walaupun responden mengetahui bahasa Indonesia sebagai lingua franca, faktanya mereka lebih banyak menggunakan bahasa Inggris sebanyak 51,9%. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini juga berupaya memberikan masukan bagi perencanaan bahasa dan pengambilan kebijakan bahasa yang bertujuan untuk menjaga bahasa nasional dan melestarikan peran bahasa Indonesia sebagai alat komunikasi penting dalam masyarakat Indonesia.

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a diverse nation with more than 700 living languages and 300 ethnic groups (Parker & Hoon, 2014). Despite this, most of Indonesian use Indonesia language as the official lingua franca (Apriyani & Nalurita, 2023; Nuryanto, 2015). It is the most widely spoken language in the nation. However, the use of English in everyday communication has become increasingly prevalent recently (Aini et al., 2022; Anggraini et al., 2023; Sa'diyah, 2023). It is happened especially among young people, due to its perceived advantages in education, business and international relations. The need for an awareness of the problem and facts about English and about the speed at which the changes of language are taking place needed to be noteworthy (Delimasari et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2019). Concerns have been made regarding how the excessive use of English as a language of daily communication may affect bahasa Indonesia's status as a lingua franca (Fitiani, 2019; Nuryanto, 2015). Bahasa Indonesia serves as a tool for communication as well as a representation of identity and unity at the national level (Kertiasih, 2018). The use of English in everyday communication may lead to a decline in the use of Indonesian, especially among younger generations. Thus, they lost their cultural and it affect their linguistics diversity.

The extensive utilization of the English language in various fields such as commerce, diplomacy, education, information technology, industry, international trade, media, politics, popular culture, and science establishes its current status as a global or international language (Arochman, 2023; Tan et al., 2020). English's prevalence is supported by its broad adoption (Zhang & Liu, 2022). English is perceived to hold a certain level of prestige, surpassing that of the Indonesian language, particularly among Indonesians (Inayati et al., 2021). Proficiency in English is considered crucial or even indispensable by numerous individuals, and it is a



prerequisite for many job positions (Hessel & Strand, 2023). It is also a symbol of knowledge, progress and refinement (Agusto, 2021). However, concerns have been raised regarding the impact of Indonesians who have received an education incorporating the English language into their use of the Indonesian language. Some view this practice as detrimental to Indonesian and as an indication of diminishing nationalistic ideals.

Understanding the consequences of English as a language of everyday communication on the erosion of Indonesian as a lingua franca requires an examination of the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of Indonesians towards their language and the role of English in their lives (Jon et al., 2021). Indonesia took a quite different approach by putting English as a foreign language while its neighboring countries such as Singapore and Philippines view English as their second language (Gunantar, 2016). Both the British English and American English are used to a greater or less extent in high-level business, academia, news and documentary media, government, administration, law, and international affairs (Bolden et al., 2023). This is why it is important to consider the complex social, economic and political factors that shape language use and to explore strategies to promote the vitality of Indonesian as a lingua franca while embracing the benefits of English as a global language (Wahyuningsih et al., 2023).

Based on previous research by Matsuda and Friedrich (2011), English is used for international language. In addition, the use of English for communication has greater emphasis on practices and pedagogical decisions in a classroom. McKay (2018) explained that English as an International Language (EIL) truly encompasses a wide range of perspectives. There are many types of English spoken today to the use of English-by-English speakers who use it as a second language. Moreover, Gunantar (2016) added the impact of English as international language on language teaching in Indonesia. The English textbooks represented the local cultures. The books deal with the life and culture of many countries around the world. Thus, textbooks have important role in teaching and learning process. Therefore, it can be said that the use of English often affects learners in their daily communication.

This study was conducted to find out the effect of using English as a language of daily communication on the erosion of Indonesian as a lingua franca of students in the fourth semester of the English Education Department at Universitas Tidar. On the other hand, the research was conducted also to answer the following questions.

1. How often do students use English compared to Indonesian?
2. How does the use of English in daily conversation affect the use of Indonesian?
3. How is the student's knowledge about the effect of using English on Indonesian as Lingua Franca?

## **METHODS**

The design used in this study were qualitative research. The goal of qualitative research is to learn about the significance that individuals and communities place on a social human problem (Creswell, 2015). The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. Qualitative data input from a variety of forms, such as notes or writing while observing the respondents, etc (Leavy, 2023; Moleong, 2010). The instrument used a questionnaire consisting of 9 questions. The questionnaire consisted of 2 questions using likert scale (rarely, sometimes,

often, usually, always), 2 yes or no questions, and 5 short answers. The questionnaire was distributed online via google form. In the essay questionnaire, respondents filled out answers based on the experience they got after using English as a daily means of communication. The data were obtained from student's perceptions of the English Education study program at Universitas Tidar and Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta from the second, fourth and sixth semesters of 27 respondents. The data were analyzed by researchers based on student's perceptions descriptively. The results were written down to reveal the research findings and conclusion.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study found out from 9 questions, all 27 respondents fill out the questionnaire which is shown by the charts and figures below:

### 1. Frequency of using English and Indonesian

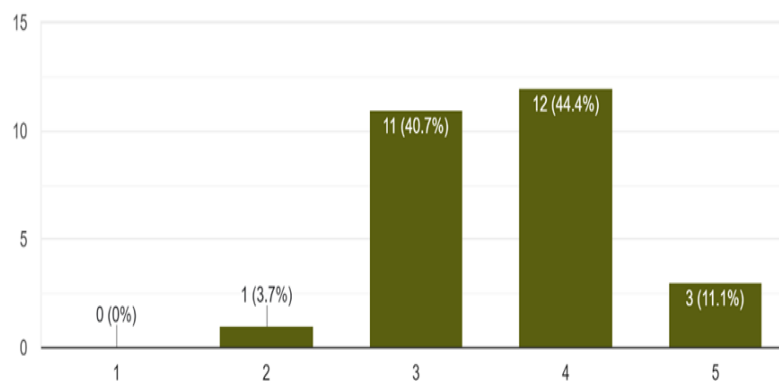


Chart 1. Frequency of Using English as Daily Communication

From the Chart 1 above, we can say that 96.2% of respondents use English as a daily means of communication quite often both in written form and spoken form. This condition varies from all of the respondents. Almost all of the respondents use English because

educational purpose such as studying in college. While texting or speaking to their friends or lecturer, they often use English. This is why respondents are very familiar with English.

## 2. The use of English affect Indonesian in conversation

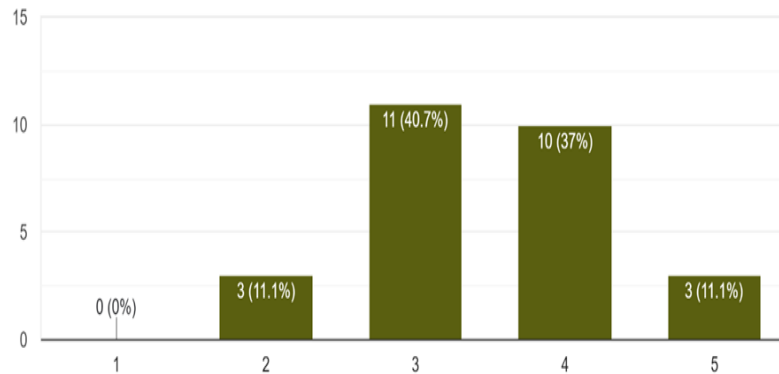


Chart 2. The Use of English Affect Indonesian in Conversation

On top of that, 88.8% of the respondents have the habit to sprinkle English words while using bahasa Indonesia. Continuing this data, we let the respondent choose whether they are aware of using or sprinkling English words while using bahasa Indonesia. From that, we know that

If so, are you aware of using English while using Bahasa Indonesia?  
27 responses

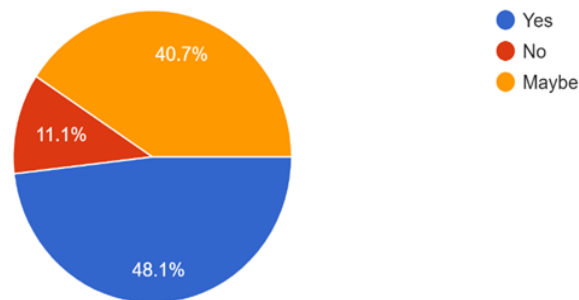


Figure 1. The Awareness of Using English and Indonesian

The question can provide insights into the attitudes and perceptions of respondents towards the integration of English within bahasa Indonesia. Their awareness of using English while using bahasa Indonesia can reveal their acceptance, resistance, or neutrality towards language mixing or borrowing. From the diagram, most of the respondents (48.1%) are aware of using English while talking or communicating using bahasa Indonesia. But that is not what the researchers concern about. The data shows that 11.1% of respondent did not aware of using English while using bahasa. This means that using English has become their unconsciousness.

Researchers asked about the respondents' opinion about the younger generation that always uses English while using bahasa Indonesia or sprinkling some English vocabulary while using bahasa Indonesia. Most of them think that it is a great way to learn English and improve

their English skill. But this can be seen from two sides, it could be a form of their learning a foreign language so that they are more accustomed to it. And it can be a time bomb that slowly takes away the local language or national language from the next generation.

From a language policy perspective, slowly but surely it can affect bahasa Indonesia, which is the lingua franca of Indonesia. From this data, researchers can understand the degree of English influence on bahasa Indonesia usage and the data can be valuable for language policymakers, educators or language planners. It can help shape decisions related to language teaching methodologies, language policy development or even the development of linguistic resources that cater to the needs of English-influenced bahasa Indonesia users.

### 3. The student's knowledge about the effect of using English on Indonesian as lingua franca

The researchers have provided a question about whether the respondent knows about bahasa Indonesia as a lingua franca. Based on the questionnaire, from 27 respondents, almost all of the respondents also know about bahasa Indonesia as a lingua franca. By asking this question, researchers can determine the respondents' level of knowledge and awareness about bahasa Indonesia as a lingua franca. This information can help gauge the respondents' linguistic background and their potential understanding of the subject matter. Unfortunately, 2 respondents still did not know about bahasa Indonesia as a lingua franca.

Besides the question from before, researchers also ask whether the respondents think that the excessive use of English can decline the use of bahasa Indonesia. Here is the chart.

Do you think that the excessive use of English can decline the use of Bahasa Indonesia?  
27 responses

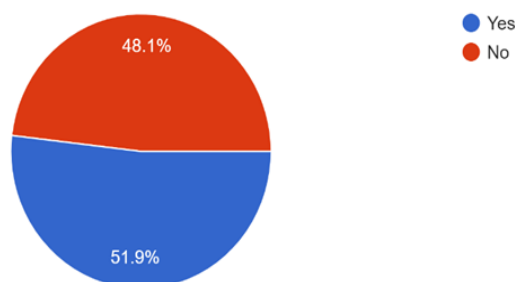


Figure 2. The Excessive Use of English and Indonesian

A language can experience a phenomenon called endangered or abandoned language. Evidenced by the existence of revitalization plans for several dying languages. This proves that languages can become extinct along with the development of new languages. From the chart above, most of the respondents (51.9%) agree with the statement. In some situations, researchers believe that English will become dominant or widely used, and there is a possibility of a language shift, where people gradually shift away from using bahasa Indonesia as their primary language. This can happen in specific domains like education, business, or media, where English may be seen as more prestigious or advantageous. On top of that, the excessive use of English can lead to the incorporation of English words, phrases or expressions into

bahasa Indonesia, resulting in language borrowing. While language borrowing is a natural linguistic phenomenon, an excessive amount of English influence may alter the linguistic landscape and potentially impact the distinctiveness of bahasa Indonesia. While the excessive use of English can potentially impact the use of bahasa Indonesia, the degree and consequences of this impact can differ in different contexts. Language policies, language planning and language education efforts can play a role in balancing the use of English and the preservation of bahasa Indonesia as a vital national language.

Researchers also asked whether they think learning English in Indonesia as a foreign language is necessary or not to the respondents through the questionnaire. Shockingly, all of them answered yes and they think that it is necessary. Almost all of them thought that while the promotion and preservation of bahasa Indonesia as the national language remain important, learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia is seen as necessary for individuals to thrive in an increasingly globalized world. English proficiency is often linked to increased job prospects and economic opportunities. Many multinational companies require employees to have English language skills, and proficiency in English can give individuals a competitive edge in the job market. It can open up employment opportunities in sectors such as tourism, hospitality, customer service, and international trade. On top of that, researchers believe that English is often the medium of instruction in higher education institutions globally. Proficiency in English enables Indonesian students to pursue educational opportunities abroad, access international scholarships, participate in academic conferences, and engage with a broader range of research and educational materials (Arochman et al., 2023). While the importance of learning English is widely recognized, it is crucial to balance the promotion of English with the preservation and development of Bahasa Indonesia. Bahasa Indonesia serves as an essential tool for national unity, cultural expression and identity. Efforts should be made to ensure that the learning of English does not overshadow the importance of bahasa Indonesia within the Indonesian context.

This studies also in line with the study of the impact of English on Indonesian language and culture (Murtisari & Mali, 2017). The study explains about Indonesian high school student's perceptions on the impact of English on their first language or lingua franca and culture. To face this problem so that in the future, lingua franca, especially bahasa Indonesia does not get replaced, we could consider balancing language education and its use so that we don't lose either language preservation or development. Language policymakers, educators, and language planners should consider the findings and develop strategies to balance the use of English and the preservation of bahasa Indonesia. Efforts should be made to maintain the vitality of bahasa Indonesia as a national language while recognizing the importance of English as a global language. It is important to note that the prevalence and impact of using English words or vocabulary in bahasa Indonesia can vary among different social groups, regions, and contexts. Some individuals may embrace and celebrate this linguistic fusion, while others may

have concerns about its potential consequences. Societal attitudes towards the phenomenon can range from acceptance and tolerance to resistance and preservation of linguistic purity.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions, it is evident that the excessive use of English as a means of everyday communication among students in the fourth semester of the English Education Department at Universitas Tidar has had a significant impact on the use of bahasa Indonesia as a lingua franca. The majority of respondents use English quite often in both written and spoken forms, and they have a habit of sprinkling English words while using bahasa Indonesia. While many respondents are aware of using English, a small percentage still use it unconsciously, which can gradually affect the dominance of bahasa Indonesia as the lingua franca. Additionally, most respondents believe that the excessive use of English can decline the use of bahasa Indonesia and that learning English as a foreign language is necessary.

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