

# The Influence

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**THE PHENOMENA OF ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE INTERFERENCE  
TO THE FIRST LANGUAGE IN “BAHASA  
GAUL” OF MILENIAL  
(CASE STUDY TO MILENIAL IN THE USE  
OF ENGLISH SLANGUAGE)**

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**ABSTRACT**

The use of English in the millennial generation as “*Bahasa Gaul*” or “*Slanglanguage*”, is very often spoken in their daily activities. This is influenced by the television, social and print media which generally target the teenagers and 90s generation. There are three theories that influence the use and role of English in *slanglanguage* among the millennial generation, namely: mass media has a large role in the expansion of new phrases (buzzword) but cannot expand new types of speech. A loan word is a phrase or words taken from one language and borrowed into another language. For example, "OK" is a loan word in Indonesian that comes from English. Code switching (also code mixture) is the name for a linguistic process. This process is related to changing languages during conversation. For example, one speaker will start speaking Indonesian before changing his language to English to explain concepts, and continue to change again to Indonesian or Javanese to say to one another, such as, "*Sampai nanti, ya. See you*". A language with a high status is a

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Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019

language that is considered by the people in the area as the language with the highest level of achievement and status. For example, during the 19th century, French was a language with a high status. In the association of millennial generation, according to them English is a high status language. So, in everyday conversation, they more often insert English words and sentences into their *slanguage*. For example, "So what, *geetu loh?*" They assume that the insertion of English in conversation can lead to the perception that users are fluent in English. This paper tries to examine the effect of the Second Language on Mother Language or First Language in Millennial Slang. Data and information obtained through test instruments or questionnaires distributed to respondents. Then, the data will be processed using simple linear regression analysis. In the end, English has an influence on the current *slanguage* of the millennial generation, besides mass media as the most effective tool in expanding the use of English words and sentences in the association of adolescents and youth in Indonesia.

*Keywords:* Slanglanguage, buzzwords, code switching, millennial generation.

### Introduction

Lately Indonesian has experienced the addition of so many vocabularies. The addition is whether from the local language, from the new big slang (ABG) or even coming from outside Indonesia, for example from China, Britain, or from other foreign countries. If the younger generation of students who in fact do not know even do not use slang or what is now often referred to as contemporary language is considered to be slang even said outdated. Regardless of damaging the Indonesian language or not, the new terms and vocabulary in the present language indirectly contribute to enrich the Indonesian vocabulary and treasury.

## The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies (ASELS) 2019

Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019

The use of contemporary language among young generation or the millenials has been spread and is very concerned because the current language they use is wacky. Its use does not pay attention to the place and atmosphere and with whom they talk. This phenomena damaged indirectly the authenticity and standardization of the Indonesian language.

The current language speaker in broaden community in Indonesia certainly has a negative impact on Indonesian speaker properly and correctly in the present and the future. At present the community has used a lot of contemporary languages (slanguage) and the severity of the young generation of Indonesia is inseparable from the use of this contemporary language. Even these young generation use the most contemporary Indonesian (slanguage) rather than Indonesian in daily life.

Usually the contemporary language (Slanguage) that is often used will experience ups and downs because each generation has a taste and the dynamics themselves. Some people even say that the current language does not need to be fussed or seriously questioned as a threat to the destruction of the language order, because it is only temporary, coming and going and always so. Today's language is only used as a communication language of young people who try to build solidarity and survive in the midst of association.

All Indonesian people have known that Indonesian language has good and correct rules, but it cannot be denied that due to changing times, new terms emerge. I do not know who created and popularized the terms of the present language, suddenly we often hear vocabulary in contemporary languages that we have never heard before.

For example, for parents / we who have "*Anak Baru Gede*", often become confused because many of the conversations they use are not understood. When asked they answer "this is slanguage." For example, "Bro, katanya lu sakit. GWS, Bro.

For more details, we must know in advance what language is? Language can be interpreted as a tool to convey something that crossed the heart. However, language is further a tool to interact or a tool to communicate, in the sense of a tool to convey thoughts, ideas,

**The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

9 concepts, or feelings. In sociolinguistic studies, language is defined as a symbol system, in the form of sound, is arbitrary, productive, dynamic, diverse, and human.

4 According to Kridalaksana (in Aslinda and Syafyahya, 2010: 1) language is an arbitrary sound symbol system used by the community to work together, interact, and identify themselves. Language is the main factor in communicating besides other factors, such as gestures, tone, and so on. Without language we will not be able to communicate verbally, so language becomes so important in our lives, like breath which is very important for human survival.

10 One of the characteristics of language, language is dynamic means that the language is not free from various possible changes at any time. At a certain time there perhaps a new term that appears but there is also an old term that sinks, is not used anymore. Language also has various meanings, even though language has the same rules or patterns, but because 10 language is used by speakers who are heterogeneous and have different social backgrounds and habits, the language also becomes diverse.

Likewise the language used by language speakers is very varied found in a group of language communities. This appears based on several factors. These factors are social background, geographical location, education, age and so on. It also can print dialects as a mapping of language regions. This makes users in accordance with social and geographical groups. The sociolinguist view thinks that the language community is always varied. Besides language always shows various internal variations as language diversity impacts from the diversity of the social background of the instructor. Besides language speakers do not only have one style (single style speaker), it causes each language speaker to use a variety of language variations in order to master the language function.

Today's language is usually used by communities that exist in the language, who else if not a community that is engaged in the entertainment field. These contemporary languages are spread through youth television programs and print media that smells of youth, then these slanguages start reaching teenagers and young generation as millenials generation. So to understand the



**The <sup>1</sup>4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019  
Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

phenomenon of the use of contemporary languages among students in the context of the Indonesian language, we must understand the history of the development of popular language in its time.

This research focuses on the discussion of the phenomenon of the use of contemporary language among students. In addition, this research is expected to be able to contribute or general knowledge about contemporary languages that are circulating among students, especially in the field of contemporary language vocabulary. Based on the description above, research into the phenomenon of contemporary languages among students is widely used to communicate between friends is very interesting to be observed.

Based on the background that has been described above, a research problem can be formulated namely "How is the phenomenon of the use of contemporary language among students?"

The purpose of this study is adjusted to the problems that exist in the limitation of the problem above and the research objective is to obtain an objective description of the slang language used among the millennials.

There are three theories that influence the use and role of English in *slang language* among the millennial generation, namely: mass media has a large role in the expansion of new phrases (buzzword) but cannot expand new types of speech. A loan word is a phrase or words taken from one language and borrowed into another language. For example, "OK" is a loan word in Indonesian that comes from English. Code switching (also code mixture) is the name for a linguistic process. This process is related to changing languages during conversation. For example, one speaker will start speaking Indonesian before changing his language to English to explain concepts, and continue to change again to Indonesian or Javanese to say to one another, such as, "*Sampai nanti, ya. See you*". A language with a high status is a language that is considered by the people in the area as the language with the highest level of achievement and status. For example, during the 19th century, French was a language with a high status. In the association of millennial generation, according to them English is a high status language. So, in everyday conversation, they more often insert English words and sentences into their

1

## The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies (ASELS) 2019

Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019

*slanglanguage*. For example, "So what, *geetu loh*?" They assume that the insertion of English in conversation can lead to the perception that users are fluent in English.

### Sociolinguistic Review

4

According to Chaer and Agustina (2010: 4) sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that is interdisciplinary with sociology, with the object of research being the relationship between language and social factors in the social community. Next, they 5<sup>th</sup> discussed linguistics as a language science or a field that took language as the object of study. Thus, sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary field which is a language in society.

5 Sumarsono (2012: 1) states that sociolinguistics discusses sociology and linguistics, because sociolinguistics has a close relationship with the two studies. Sosio is a society and linguistics is the study of language. So sociolinguistics is a review of language that deals with social conditions.

In society, a person is no longer considered a separate individual, but as a member of a social group. Therefore, language and its use do not involve individuals, but discussions with their activities in the community or socially chosen.

Research on the phenomenon of the use of slanguages among the millennials is included in sociolinguistic studies. The slanguage used to converse produces language relations in social interaction communication.

### Slang

Slang is a variation of language characterized by newly discovered and rapidly changing vocabulary (Aslinda and Syafyahya, 2010: 18). Slang is indeed more a vocabulary field than phonology and grammar. Therefore, the vocabulary used in this slang is always changing.

Slang is temporal and is more commonly used by young people although some older people also use it. According to Alwasilah (in Aslinda Syafyahya, 2010: 18) Slang language variations are used by young people or social and professional groups

## **The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies (ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

to communicate 'in secret'. Because this slang is group and secret, there is an impression that this slang is the secret language of thieves and criminals, when in fact this is not the case. This confidentiality factor also causes the vocabulary used in slang to change frequently.

Because the vocabulary in the present language also changes every year or is temporal, this slanguage can also be categorized as slang.

### **Phenomena**

The definition of phenomena according to the Indonesian Dictionary is (1) things that can be witnessed with the senses and can be explained and evaluated scientifically; (2) something extraordinary, a miracle; (3) facts, facts: the event is a historical phenomenon that cannot be ignored.

Therefore, the use of contemporary language among students can be categorized into a phenomenon that is facts, facts circulating among students and of course this cannot be ignored.

### **Kekinian**

The present definition according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary is the current or current / latest situation. Kekinian can also mean something that is popular or currently booming. Therefore, contemporary languages are languages that are popular or currently booming. Of course, the current language used and developed at this time will also experience changes and will not even be used again in the coming years but new vocabulary will appear.

### **The Origin of Kekinian**

Today's language which is now widely used by teenagers and even now penetrated among students comes from slang. This slang appeared in the 1990s in electronic media such as radio and television. According to Oetomo (2002: 104) the words used at a glance are very recognizable, but the context and meaning, at least at the beginning, seem out of place.

Slang is one form of language variation that arises due to the development of the times. Slang is a language used to communicate



**1**  
**The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

and mingle with friends in the community. The use of slang is more dominated by young people, as teenagers today are more frequent and happy to use slang than the official Indonesian. According to them, slang is more comfortable and suitable for use in daily life, they consider the use of official language too rigid and monotonous.

According to Yuniaryani (2015: 230) the presence of slang goes hand in hand with the concept of popular culture in Indonesia. He further said that the phenomenon of slang was absorbed so perfectly by adolescents widely without going through meaningful filters. Indonesian society at large and adolescents in particular simply absorb all forms of modernization of life.

Along with the development of the times, the emergence of slang is considered reasonable because it is in accordance with the demands of the development of the conscience of adolescents. The use of slang is also limited to adolescents of certain age groups and is informal. The use of slang becomes better known the public after the artist Debby Sahertian collected vocabulary used in their community and published a dictionary called the Gaul Dictionary in 1999.

Slang used by these teenagers experienced a change in terms of names due to the development of the times, from the name of the slang finally changed to the name of the present language. The users of slanguages are not limited to middle and high school adolescents but have penetrated among the millenials. Nowadays, contemporary languages are increasingly thriving in the community and this is supported by the use of contemporary languages that are widely used by artists on television who broadcast ABG-themed cinematronic.

#### **Millenial Generation**

Millennial generation is the generation that is strongly influenced by television, internet and social media. This group was used as a role model for ordinary Indonesian youth. This influence can be considered through comparing the activities of youth with the activities of characters in television. Youth are increasingly influenced, through the siren of popularity, to take part in the slang that is shown and recommended by the mass media and found in the new generation.

**1**  
**The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

Because of the cultural influences of countries such as the United States and North Asia on this group, this group increasingly uses English in their daily language. Because of the reputation of English in Indonesia, I believe that language can be considered as high cultural language or *Bahasa Budaya Tinggi* (BBT). This status sign is everywhere. One term can be found in the advertising field. Nearly all advertisements for expensive or high-achieving items are written in English.

**The Role of Mass Media**

The mass media has an interesting role in the expansion of language change. Although there is a perception that mass media can influence and expand new techniques for speaking and using languages, in fact mass media can only reflect changes that have already taken place or expand new buzzword. In addition, the mass media is not able to change the language in any way (Chambers:2005).

**Code Switching and Code Mixture**

Code switching theory has been a long time in sociolinguistics. Basically, this theory focuses on the choice of languages as social indicators. The concept of code switching was discussed for the first time in 1972, when it was used to explain the linguistic situation in villages in Norway<sup>10</sup>. Since that time the theory of transfer and coda mixture has continued to rise in reputation as a rather interesting field of sociolinguistics.

Basically this theory is made to explain the change of language in conversation. For example this example is considered code in Mesthrie, et al:

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*Nipe ile sweet u-li-tu-promise. Kwanza u-li-tu-ambia  
u-ta-tu-peleka tawo, alafu u-ka-lost!*

When there is a code switching, the code is marked in italics. One more example:

1

## The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies (ASELS) 2019

Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019

2

*En Puerto Rico* he would say *que cortaba ca~a*, even though *tenia su negocio*, you know.

As can be seen from these examples, the change in language can occur anywhere in the sentence, and the reasons are often unclear.

While code switching can be used to indicate status, and this aspect is the most important for this study. For example, during the late 19th century in England, rich people often used French in conversation to show their level of education and experience in worldly matters (Wilde: 2001).

But sometimes the results of code switching can get status alone. Even if the conversation includes two or more languages, all with relative status to the others, sometimes the mixed language ('hodgepodge') can handle statuses that are different from the source language.

During his research in Nairobi by Myers-Scotton he examined the use of coded as an unmarked choice. According to him:

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The young men...are not satisfied with either the identity associated with speaking English alone or that associated with speaking...Swahili alone...They solve the problem of making a choice by evolving a pattern of switching between the two languages. Thus, code-switching...becomes [their choice] (Mesthrie:2000).

Therefore, a mixture of two languages can be a linguistic object with a different status from the source; Mixed languages can be ordinary languages.

### Loan Words

Loans words are foreign words that are included in everyday language as ordinary words. For example the word loan in Indonesian includes taxis, buses, posts, tv and others. This concept is not often researched compared to code transfer, but the results can be seen throughout the world. Most world cultures use the word loan in

## The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies (ASELS) 2019

Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019

several contexts and circumstances depending on their needs and history. For example English borrows words from several languages but mainly French or Latin. These words include phrases and words like etcetera, envelope, nouveau riche<sup>15</sup> and many others.

This phenomenon is often seen in context with the language in power in the outside world. For example, because English is the main language for science research, many words for science matters in English are loan words from English.

### High Status Language (BBT)

A BBT is a language that is very powerful in the population in the area. This phenomenon usually occurs in a bilingual state, when there is language used by the authorities and other languages used by ordinary people.

But this situation also often occurs in a monolingual state. Usually this is due to contacts with interesting and more powerful cultures in politics or culture. Because of this the inhabitants of the region are more likely to want to learn and use language that excels, even though they cannot use it at all.

The result of this desire is an increase in the use of loan words from foreign languages. As explained in section c, the word loan is more often the result of the need for a new level (register), but when there is BBT the words are also borrowed if there is no need for a register. For example, with slang words like thanks. The meaning is the same in taste and usage with terima kasih or trims, but because English is BBT, the speaker often uses more status varieties; however, *makasih*.

For example BBT results can be seen throughout the world in the field of world slang languages. Almost all languages with links to the culture of the United States of America use young people or millenials to use some loan words in their slang, which come from English.

### Method

This study if focused to young generation or millenials whise age is 17 to 25 years old. It is because they often speak "*Bahasa*



**1**  
**The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

*Gaul*". I used observation and interview to collect the data and information.

**The Role of Mass Media in Expansion of New English  
Phrases**

The role of mass media as a tool that expands new English phrases is quite effective, however the role of mass media as followers of new trends.

One reason for mastery of mass media comes from the English linguistic situation in Indonesia. English cannot be used fluently by most Indonesians, so new phrases usually come to mean Indonesians as buzzwords.

It is because most English phrases that have just entered Indonesia as buzzwords, mass media, as the most efficient buzzword dealer, plays a big role.

**Case Study: So What Geetu Loh?**

The phrase "*so what geetu loh?*" (in English is "Is it important?") began to expand greatly from Jakarta around early 2005, after the release of the song the same name, "So What So" by Saykoji, a rap band from Bandung. This song became very popular and was performed in almost every cafe<sup>21</sup> throughout Indonesia.

The taste of the song is somewhat satirical in the life of rap singers in the world<sup>22</sup>. This song quickly became a regular on MTV and regular TV, and entered MTV's Top Ten in May. The Saykoji song continued on the Top Ten until the end of August ([www.mtv.com](http://www.mtv.com)).

As this song was expanded as popular music, the phrase "*so what geetu loh?*" became a very popular phrase. But after the song is less popular, the phrase also follows. Although many people still use the phrase there is a tendency to regard its use as not trendy, not in accordance with the standard of popularity.

Even though this phrase is just a trend and so it is not often used now other than in some contexts, it is usually ironic, because its

**The <sup>1</sup>4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

expansion is easily seen and very clearly I consider this phrase as the clearest example of the effect of mass media in expanding new English phrases. As the largest source of information in Indonesia, the mass media has the greatest authority in the expansion of new phrases.

**Special Vocabularies in English**

This vocabs oftens spoken by millenials such as “It means more kalo gue pake Bahasa Inggris”, “I love you pull deh!”, “Anto loves Ira”, etc.

The origin of the use of English in this context is the position of the language as BBT in Indonesia, and also because of the influence of film and music in Indonesia, which often talks about love matters in English.

Because English is BBT, when music or actors talk about love, the millienials will be influenced to participate in US behavior, because in his opinion the style of the US is cooler, more intimate. This phenomenon can be seen in western countries too, for example Australia, where US language is often used to explain feelings to a girlfriend or boyfriend.

Indonesian language sources, the material also includes many phrases or words derived from English.

For example in the film *Get Married*, most characters in the film often use English when talking about their feelings.

When this usage was carried out by film and music stars, it was not long before its use was followed by ordinary youth.

When discussing this topic with informants they agreed with this conclusion. They consider English as BBT, and therefore, if the language is used to talk about love matters, there is a connotation that the relationship is of high status too.

So because of such opinions the field of love attracts many English phrases, from the ordinary (*I love you, honey*) to the more extraordinary or harsh (*pick-up line, ML, nge-date*).

The use of the English phrase also originates in the use of televisio, films and radio from Indonesia. Although that source is treated that has high status in the level of dialogues.

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**The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

**The Situation of English Usage (Formal or Informal  
Situation)**

Mostly of the speakers used English in informal situation or among peer groups. One of the Indonesian artists whose half-bred said:

“Selain acting, aku juga suka listen to the music. Tapi waktunya hanya sedikit karena kesibukan acting ini. Kalo lagi take a rest, aku suka liat-liat toko on-line”.

Di samping itu, salah satu pembawa acara terkemuka yang juga millennial, pernah mengucapkan,

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“Tidak mustahil bahwa nanti akan ada **the best and the brightest women di Indonesia** yang akan menjadi trendsetter di Indonesia”.

In English academic books play a big role in making new words and are a source for many words that are used very often.

Forms of language that are considered formal in Australia (for example interviews) and are used every day in formal contexts are not considered Indonesian.

The explanation for this phenomenon can be found in the choice of English used. When I discuss this with the informant, if I ask "can English phrases or words be used in the context of x?" (When x is a formal situation such as a meeting with a lecturer, or conversation) they without exception respond, "No".

However, the origin of the contradiction is the difference in the minds of Indonesian youth between Indonesian and slang. Because I ask about slang before asking about formal and informal languages, there is a connotation that I am talking about slang English not formal English and which can be used. Of course English slang should not be used in a formal Indonesian situation, so the answer is "No".

1

**The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

In conclusion English loans can be analyzed at two levels, informal and formal, and these two levels are separated by the perception of Indonesian people in the same way used to separate formal slang and Indonesian

**Change in the Meaning of English Loan Words**

When new words enter another language, the meaning usually doesn't change quickly. But in Indonesia the meaning and usage in slang is often different from the meaning and usage in English. This difference cannot be explained by the need for Indonesian grammar and design; the meaning is totally different. For the first example, let's look at the word "okey", originally 'okay'.

**Case Study: Change of the Meaning of OK**

In English the word 'okay' means 'not bad', 'good enough' or 'I agree', depending on the context. See the three examples below:

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Why don't we go to the shop?

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**The <sup>1</sup>4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

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**The <sup>1</sup>4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019  
Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

With that sentence, the words 'okay' and 'okay' mean the same. In this context there is no change in meaning.

<sup>2</sup> Oh, that place is okay I guess.

TERJEMAH  
AN: Tempat  
itu lumayan  
menurut  
pendapat  
saya.

In this context, the meaning between “*okay*” and “*oke*” is different. Since the word “*oke*” comes into Indonesian Language, the meaning has changed too far to be used for direct translation in this example.

<sup>2</sup> Who okayed this deal?

TERJEMAHAN: Siapa  
menandatangani persetujuan ini?

The use of “*okay*” is not usual yet in English. Therefore, it is not strange that there’s no meaning in Indonesian language.

**The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

There is a different between the use of “oke” and “okay”. The meaning of “oke” as “unggul” is not existing in English. One of the example on the use of it is in the slogan of RCTI television station. “Semakin Oke”. If the word “oke” still exist in the meaning is the same as the word “okay” in English, this use is impossible, as there’s no advertisement campaign that expect the viewer that the program is “getting better”.

Therefore, the meaning of “oke” is considered as:

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**The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

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**The <sup>1</sup>4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019**

**Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

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**The <sup>1</sup>4<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar on English Language Studies  
(ASELS) 2019  
Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Hasanuddin  
Makassar, 11 December 2019**

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2. Means “unggul”, “sempurna”, “sangat baik”, etc.  
e.g: Semakin Oke.

Thus, semantic change of the word “okay” is clear enough. Although there’s another words that can get the use and new meaning.

Finally, the transition from English to Indonesian slang many words experience changes in their meaning and usage. The purpose is quite clear - to unite the new word with the needs of the new user.

Circumstances can be seen throughout the English-speaking world. In the United States most harsh words are louder; in Australian most of them are less harsh. In English, 'bugger' has a rough meaning; in Australia the word is almost a nationalist word, and is used in a very popular advertising campaign. Changes in the meaning of words

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between two languages or two types of language are not a sign of error but a sign of cultural differences.

English is as BBT in “Bahasa Gaul”

The use of English is considered by the public as good or familiar in Indonesia. More sources of informants answered that in their opinion the use of English was a pretty good phenomenon.

### **Reasons for Using English Phrases or Words**

There are some reason why they use English phrases or words, such as, “suka saja”, “sudah biasa”, or “bahasa gaul” or “untuk belajar”. Mostly millennial used English phrases or words often.

### **The English Phrases or Words which Often Used**

There are some English phrases that are used more often than others. The most commonly used is “thanks”, “then”, which is”, see you, “so what geetu loh?”, etc.

In an informal situation “thanks” really is the most used word. But the phrases “please deh” and “sorry” are almost the same in popularity. This result is not at all reflective of linguistic situations.

### **Conclusion**

English has the role as a high status language to the “bahasa Gaul” of millenials in Jakarta. Besides, status of English as a language that is not suitable for everyday language. People who speak English alone are considered arrogant and elitist, so English cannot be used as a suitable slang. However, mostly consider that English is as the main “Bahasa Gaul” in informal situation among the millenials.

English, although its use is considered informal, it is considered a high status language by millennials. So its use as part of slang in everyday conversation is a phenomenon that can be found easily.

But the word loan from English is not taken directly; although words from English entered slang as a normal component, the word loan began to be changed in its meaning and usage.

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Examples of words that get different meanings in slang include okay and many other words.

In addition to changing its meaning and use, English in slang has several other features. Loan patterns are not the same in all fields. In some fields, perhaps most definitely in the field of love, English is used far more often. But for Millennials, English has a role that is no different from the role of French in Britain during the past century: English is the language of love for millennials.

The expansion of this new language cannot be carried out the same quickly if it is not helped by the mass media. As the first source for new loan words, and as a tool to expand the new trend, the mass media played a major role in expanding the influence of English on millennials.

Therefore, the result of the relationship between the languages used by millennials between English and Indonesian is the inclusion of many English loan words in millennial slang, a process that often includes changes in the meaning of new words. But all of the above are only the most important symptoms of change caused by the relationship of these languages; a new variety of slang, a mixed language that includes Indonesian and English. These results are the most important results for the future of Indonesia.

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