

The Formation of Japanese *Wakamono Kotoba* and Indonesian *Bahasa Gaul*

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ABSTRACT

Youth language is a language gap between the elders and the youths. The purpose of this research is to describe youth language or slang, which in Japanese is called *wakamono kotoba*. The data was collected from YouTube content because YouTube has a large number of viewers. Both Japanese and Indonesian contents included 48 youth slang. The technique of comparing each category and characteristic of Japanese and Indonesian youth slang was used as an analysis. The explanation of the forms of how youth language is formed will be put in the categories based on the youth language formations theory by Tanaka (1996). The result revealed that Indonesian youth slang formation was dominated by abbreviation formations. While in Japanese, it is dominated by the formation of flattening the accent and characterization. Moreover, Japanese youth languages have the addition of nouns and auxiliary verbs because the Japanese language has Kanji, Hiragana, and Katakana letters.

Keywords: *Bahasa gaul, sociolinguistic, wakamono kotoba, youth slang.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is something important in our life. We have already known that the use of language is to communicate with others by asking, telling, hoping, commanding, requesting, and many more (Pateda, 2015). Language users are diverse. Speech varieties are four types such as social speech varieties (also called social dialects or sociolects), regional speech varieties (also called regional dialects), and functional speech varieties (O'Grady, Dobrovolsky, & Katamba, 1996). This diversity will increase if the language is used by a very large number of speakers and in a very wide area (Chaer, 2010). From the previous opinions, we can conclude that language may be different depending on the place and person.

Youths are leaders in creating new words (Tanaka, 1996). Furthermore, Tanaka explained that young people in Japan are the leaders in creating new and popular words one by one and spreading them all over the world. Therefore, Japanese people always have difficulty speaking Japanese at a certain age. Youth language in the Indonesian language is called *bahasa gaul*, and in the Japanese language, it is often called *wakamono kotoba*. It is also a gap between youths and elders because most of the elders feel that youth language especially nowadays is difficult to understand. Youths often make the diverse

words likewise in Indonesia, we often hear about *skuy*, *ngab*, *bomat*, and *bucin*. From the previous words, we see the mirrored words like *skuy* and *ngab*, those are taken from *yuku* 'let's go' and *bang* 'brother'. Then, there are shortened words like *bomat* and *bucin*. *Bomat* is a shortened word of "*bodo amat*" that means 'like I care' (Suharyati, 2020).

Not only youths in Indonesia, but also youths in Japan also create and form the slang language. For example, *tapiru*, *otsu*, *shigo owa* which means 'have a bubble tea drink', 'thanking for the hard work', and 'job has finished'. We can see the form of *tapiru* is the shortened form of "*tapioka o taberu*" which means 'drinking bubble tea' (Jikitorai, 2020). However, shortening words in Japanese and Indonesian youth slang and mirrored words in Indonesian are still two of the examples of how youth slang is formed.

Youth language is always changing time by time. It means that youth language from the era of 90s till the 2015s are different in the past, Indonesian used the word "*neber*" which is mirrored form of "*bener*" which means 'correct' (Sumarsono, 2007). In the present day, Indonesians never use this word again. In Japanese, there is a word "*gessen*" which shortened form of "*geemu sentaa*" word means 'game center' (Sudjiyanto, 2007).

Japanese does not use that word anymore in the present day because they would rather play the game at home.

Some research discuss youth slang. Likewise in Matsumoto and Ren (2011) discussed the usage of Japanese youth slang in the scope of semantical usage. From the results, it was found that semantic information is difficult to use effectively because many *wakamono kotoba* words have complex meanings so that in the description there are often noisy words.

Miller (2004) examined the usage of *kogals*. It concerns Japanese female youths who challenged dominant models of gendered language and behavior through linguistic and cultural innovation. The article of Miller describes the *kogals* usage to construct female-centered subcultural identities.

Bucholtz (2000) discussed youth culture, the diversity, and rapidly changing stylistic practices that many teenagers and young adults draw on in the construction and display of their identities. Although styles and situations constantly change, the symbolic usage of language to perform identity will endure the language itself.

Nelsen and Rosenbaum (1972) observed the development of youth slang in the youth sub-community. The result reveals that adolescent males and females, grades 7-12, in groups form according to sex and grade level, listed slang words for specified topics. Male groups tended to produce more slang than the female group.

Inui (2003) conducted a study about the language transition from school to work that has been changing radically. The transition process has been prolonged, and the pattern has become more diverse. It is possible that youths are being restructured profoundly.

Then, the research from Alisyahbana (2020) discussed the formation of Japanese youth slang. The results obtained from this study are from 37 *wakamono kotoba* data from Twitter, obtained 5 affixations, 9 compounding, 1 reduplication, 31 clipping, and 7 borrowing data (Alisyahbana, 2020).

Despite the youth slang keep changing, the rule of how to form the youth slang is never changed like mirrored words and shortened word. Thus, the writer is interested in observing how youth slang is in Japanese and Indonesia. To reveal the formations of the youth slang in the present day.

2. METHOD

The tapping technique is a technique that researcher uses to gather the data. That is the technique by tapping the usage of how language can be in the form of oral or written like mentioned in the book of Kesuma (2007).

The data that will be used by the writer are the YouTube content videos which include the *wakamono*

kotoba in Japanese and *bahasa gaul* in Indonesian. In the present day, YouTube is recognized as a platform for youth to express their passions. To make their content attractive, announcers must use the language that represents their age which is youth slang. YouTubers also sometimes discuss present-day's trends like fashion, entertainment, sport, and even youth language itself. YouTube content that I chose is youth languages that are discussed by YouTubers. Japanese contents are "*Wakamono Kotoba ga Tsukatte miru to Kitsui*" by Sakura Amashin and "*Shiranai to Ojiisan Obaasan Atsukai Sareru Wakamono Kotoba Go Sen*" by Rankingu Dainamaito channels. For Indonesian contents, Kevin Prabowo's "*Bahasa Anak Jaman Sekarang*" and Keluarga El's "*10 Bahasa Gaul*" videos. Then, I mention the youth languages only. Then, they put all the youth languages on the tables. From the videos, I found 38 youth languages in total, 19 in Japanese and 19 in Indonesian. In addition, I only focused on the youth languages that exist nowadays although there are so many youth languages. Furthermore, the YouTube content that I mentioned before also discussed the youth languages that exist nowadays.

The technique of category comparison and characteristic is used to compare the Japanese and Indonesian youth slang. First, the comparison of the language events as linguistically adaptable phenomena, which then from that event came categorization. Furthermore, the author combines that category with its characteristic like mentioned in Mahsun (2017). Then, to explain the formation how youth language is formed, categorization based on the youth language form theory by Tanaka and supported by the theory that supported youth languages will be added. The basic formations of youth slang based on Tanaka's (1996) theory are (1) *Shouryakugo* 'abbreviation', (2) *Sakasa kotoba* 'reversing words', (3) *Meishi to jodoushi no tsuika* 'the addition of noun and auxiliary verb', (4) *Jinbutsu zokugo* 'characterization', (5) *Akusento no heibanka genshou* 'flattening the accent', (6) *Fukushi o koutei teki ni mochiiru* 'positively use the adverb'.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data collected, the amount of Japanese and Indonesian slang is summarized in Table 1. The following is the explanations about the data in each basic formation of youth slang based on Tanaka's (1996) theory.

3.1. *Shouryakugo* / *Abbreviation*

Japanese slang (3): *jiwaru*, 'ma?', and *zekki*.
Indonesian slang (9): *cukstau*, *CMIW*, *palbis*, *kamseupay*, *GWS*, *PHP*, *curcol*, *alay*, and *baper*.

In Japanese, the word of *jiwaru* is shortened form of *jiwa-jiwa to warai ga komi agete kuru*, 'ma?' is from

Table 1. The amount of Japanese and Indonesian slang

Japanese Slang	Amount	%	Indonesian Slang	Amount	%
Abbreviation	3	7,8	Abbreviation	9	23,6
Reversing Word	0	0	Reversing Word	3	7,8
Addition of Noun & Aux. Verb	2	5,2	Addition of Noun & Aux. Verb	0	0
Characterization	6	15,7	Characterization	2	5,2
Flattening the Accent	7	18,4	Flattening the Accent	4	10,5
Positively Use the Adverb	1	2,6	Positively Use the Adverb	1	2,6
Total	19	50	Total	19	50
Total Youth Slang	38	100			

maji, and *zekki* is from *zettai okiru*. While in Indonesian, *cukstau* is short version of *cukup tahu*, *CMIW* is taken from English sentence which is ‘Correct Me If I Am Wrong’, *palbis* is from *paling bisa*, *GWS* is also taken from English sentence which is ‘Get Well Soon’, *curcol* is from *curhat colongan*, *alay* is from *anak layangan* and *baper* is from *bawa perasaan*.

According to Tanaka (1996), The youth languages above are formed by the omission of long words to keep them easier to be remembered and used. It is used frequently. However, the abbreviation is not only used to shorten the long words like what youths did, it is also used in public, which is also called by an acronym (Sumarsono, 2017). Tsujimura (in Alisyahbana, 2020) mentions that abbreviation form is also called “clipping”. It has a similar definition to Tanaka and Sumarsono's theory, a process of shortening the words. In the present day, we often use the abbreviation slangs not only for making youth language but also for communication to make a simple and way more effective instead of using a long sentence that may confuse people. For example, ASAP or “As Soon As Possible, HIV or “Human Immunodeficiency Virus”, COVID-19 or “Corona Virus Disease that discovered in 2019”, and many more. People may recognize the terms in the previous sentence by the abbreviation to make it easy to remember. In other words, abbreviation makes it easier to remember sentences and terms.

3.2. Sakasa Kotoba / Reversing Word

Japanese slang: none.

Indonesian slang (3): *bais*, *hacep*, *sabeb*

According to the data obtained from YouTube, Japanese slang was not founded. However, there is three Indonesian youth slang in reversing word formation. *Bais* is the reversed word from the original word *bisa*. *Hacep* is taken from the original word *pecah*. Then, *sabeb* word is the reverse form of *bebas*.

Tanaka (1996) explains that reversing words is defined as reversing the word from the original word. It is not only rearranging the words from the opposite to each beat but also divides words. *Hacep* and *sabeb* are truly formed by rearranging the words from the opposite. *Bais* is formed by dividing the word. Indonesian often reversing words to create the youth languages like the citizens in Malang City, Sumarsono (2017). Most of the words in Malang City are formed by reversing formation. Just like what Tanaka said, youths are the leader in making a new word. Just like in the reversing word, when they take a real word and change it into reversing formation, means that they are good at creating new words. In the other words, youth show their creativity in making a word.

3.3. Meishi to Jodoushi no Tsuika / The Addition of Noun and Auxiliary verb

Japanese slang (2): *waita* and *shika kattan*.

Indonesian slang: none.

Japanese youth languages above are formed by adding Japanese auxiliary verbs like “*ta*” in *waita*, “*tan*” in *shika kattan*. Although there is also *jodoushi* ‘auxiliary verb’ like “*ru*”, “*ta*”, and many more. Furthermore, Tanaka explains that it is a phenomenon limited to the Japanese youth language. Similarly, the endings of the Japanese auxiliary verbs are made up of words written in Kanji and Hiragana. For this reason, Japanese youths emphasize the auxiliary endings from other parts.

This youth slang formation has a connection in morphology. It is caused by the combination of morphemes that form a word (Goh & Silver, 2004). In Japanese, *jodoushi* is a group of a word that the form can change. This group of Japanese words cannot form a phrase. It will change into a phrase if the other words form together. *Jodoushi* are: *da*, *desu*, *ta*, *tan*, *ran*, *rashii*, and many more (Dahidi, 2007). The Japanese language has Kanji letter reading rules, they are *kunyomi* and *onyomi* rule. When a Kanji letter is positioned alone as a word, Japanese people usually read it by Japanese reading rule or *kunyomi* which gives its meaning. When a Kanji letter is positioned together with another one to make a word, Japanese people read it by Chinese rule or *onyomi*, (Chieko, Shimizu, Takenaka, & Ishii, 1990). *Kunyomi* rule always positions Kanji letter first and then followed by Hiragana letter while *onyomi* is always positions two or more Kanji letters together. In the form of addition noun and auxiliary verb, youth slang is similar with *kunyomi* rule because there is a Kanji or another noun and followed by Hiragana letter likewise *kattan* which taken from *katsu* in Kanji and followed by *-ttan* auxiliary verb in Hiragana. However, *kattan* is not only a single morpheme but also able to form into other morphemes. It may turn into *katsu*, *kachimasu*, *katanai*, *kachimasen*, and many more.

3.4. *Jinbutsu Zokugo / Characterization*

Japanese slang (6): *pien*, *chii gyu*, *nikoichi*, *kyun*, *emoi*, and *manji*.

Indonesian slang (2): *kicep* and *baday*.

As we can see in Japanese youth slang, this slang is used to symbolized something. We can see *pien* word, Japanese youths say that word because it sounds like how people cry (Jikitorai, 2020). *Chii gyu* is used to symbolize something that looks like fat. *Emoi* is used when they see a face with facial expressions based on our social media emoticon (Shogakukan, 2021). When Japanese youth see two friends but look-alike twins because of their similarity in appearance and behavior, they call two people *nikoichi*. *Kyun* is formed by the thumb and pointed finger that stick together. It is always used when Japanese young females see their idol. *Manji* itself is one of Buddhism's sacred symbols. It looks like the World War II flag of the German "Swastika" but, *Manji* has different direction reverse from the old German "Swastika". *Manji* is sometimes used as an open mouth photo pose (Ashcraft, 2018). Indonesian also use characterization like *baday*. It is a symbolization of a storm that breaks anything and obviously makes people amazed. That is why Indonesian say *baday* when they see amazing things. Then, Indonesian uses *kicep* words to represent a silent mouth position. *Kicep* is used in the situation when people cannot do anything or answer some question or solve the problem.

These words often have negative meanings and are developed to direct expression. It is also considered a type of euphemism (Tanaka, 1996). Fromkin and Rodman (1973) mention that symbol or sign by which the sound and meaning are related because the relationship between speech sound and the meaning are related. Like the Japanese youth slangs above, it expresses a real thing to the euphemism. In other words, euphemism is used to symbolize the real object. Fromkin and Rodman (1973) mention that symbol or sign by which the sound and meaning are related. Piaget (in Goh & Silver, 2004) explains that language could be formed by an experienced object, then people thought it into cognitive development and after that, the object turns into a language. To create a youth slang based on the characterization formation, youths often see some object and the object itself can be used as a word in a sentence. The word itself has a connotative meaning. It means that when a word has an additional sense that is beyond the conceptual meaning (Goh & Silver, 2004). In this paper, Japanese may say *pien*, *chii gyu*, *nikoichi*, *kyun*, *emoi*, and *manji*, while Indonesian make a youth slang *kicep*, and *baday* because of the characteristics.

3.5. *Akusento no Heibanka Genshou / Flattening the Accent*

Japanese slang (7): *Jirai meiku*, *ryousangata meiku*, *kumo meiku*, *wanchan*, *kareppi*, *sukippi*, and "...mi"

Indonesian slang (4): *gengges*, *spupet*, *oretz* and *kemek*.

Jirai meiku, *ryousangata meiku*, and *kumo meiku* flatten the *meiku* word from the original word *meikuappu*. *wanchan* is flatten form of original word "one chance". Japanese youth in the present day pronounce *kareppi* instead of *kareshi* however, just a few speakers. *Sukippi* is used to say what youth loves. The original word of *sukippi* itself is *suki na* and then, Japanese youths flatten it into *sukippi*. Then, "...mi" is always used as an adjective in Japanese. While in the Indonesian language, *gengges* is a flattening form of *ganggu*. *Spupet* stands for *sepupu*. Indonesian youth call their cousin by *spupet* instead of *sepupu*. Indonesian would rather flatten "alright" into *oretz*. At last, the original word of *kemek* is *makan*. It is used to ask a friend to eat.

Tanaka (1996) said that flattening the accent is like borrowing pronunciation from the other vocabulary. Japanese speakers pronounce youth slang above *kareppi* that is taken from the actual personal pronoun *kareshi* however, youths do not lower the subsequent syllables from *kareshi* into *kareppi*. Tends to pronounce flat as it is. Also, the *meiku* words in the flattening the accent like *jirai meiku*, *ryousan gata meiku*, and *kumo meiku*. The origin of *meiku* itself is *meiku appu* or make up. *Wanchan* itself is also *gairaigo* or a Japanese word that is taken from a foreign language (Dahidi, 2007). Japanese flatten the word "one chance" into *wanchan*. *Sukippi* is taken from the original word *suki na* as an adjective to show affection to each other (Numan, 2018). Then, "...mi" itself is used to flatten the Japanese adjective. The normal adjective in Japanese is followed by "...i" and "...na" (Tomomatsu & Wakuri, 2020). Based on the YouTube channel Rankingu Dinamaito, there is some examples of "...mi" usage. It is *yabami* instead of *yabai* which means danger. Likewise in Japanese *gairaigo*. Indonesians also use the foreign word but, Indonesian would rather flatten it like "alright" into *oretz*.

3.6. *Fukushi o Koutei Teki ni Mochiiru / Positively Use the Adverb*

Japanese slang (1): *docchakuso*

Indonesian slang (1): *luv banget*

While in Indonesian youth slang "*luv banget*" is not weird Indonesian because it is just a common expression to express an agreement. *Docchakuso* itself is an adverb that place before the adjective. For example, *docchakuso tanoshikatta* means so pleased (Shogakukan, 2020). It is expressed as something is positive in agreement. In Tanaka's example like *zenzen ii* is mentioned that it is a

positive agreement towards a good thing. Though most Japanese elders said that it is a 'weird language' (Tanaka, 1996). In Japanese grammar, this formation has a similar function to *fukushi* or adverb. It is a word which function is to indicate the verb, adjective, and another adverb based on the situation, the intensity of an activity, or the feeling of a speaker (Matsuoka, in Dahidi, 2007). *docchakuso* and *luv banget* are feeling-based *fukushi* 'adverb' because both state what the speaker feels about something.

From the discussion, we can conclude that Indonesian's formation is dominated by abbreviation formation. In Japanese, it is dominated by the formation of flattening the accent. Japanese youth languages have the addition of noun and auxiliary verbs because Japan has Kanji, Hiragana, and Katakana letter.

4. CONCLUSION

Youth slang is changing and different depends on the time and place. As we can see from the previous discussion, Indonesian youth slang is dominated by the abbreviation formation, while in Japanese the youth slang is dominated by flattening accent nowadays. This conclusion proves that the formations of youth slang are always changing time by time. In the future, there will be a possibility that the domination of youth slang is different from today and the past. In the other words, other formations like reversing words, the addition of auxiliary verbs and nouns, and positive usage of the adverb may dominate the future possibilities in the formation of youth slang especially in Japanese and Indonesian. Writer expect that this article may educate the readers about the formations of youth slang in Japanese and Indonesian that are used in the present day.

Furthermore, it is not a gap between youth and the elders because writer already give information about youth slang in the present day based on the YouTube channel. If all young people already know, this language will remain a secret for groups of children, adults, and even the elderly. That is why writer observe the formation of youth slang. Moreover, this paper may give the benefit in the knowledge of sociolinguistic. Then, the diversity or variation of this language is not only caused by the speakers who are not homogeneous but also because the social interactions carried out are very diverse. It is proof that language can make a variety, especially in language and age. Especially youth language. Writer realize that this research paper still needs improvement and is still far from its accuracy. For the researchers who are interested in youth slang, we suggest using detail information based on social phenomenon or media like television series, websites, films, novels, and comic books. Besides, the formula and other theories may make the next research stand out.

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