

Gay Language in Bali

(Sociolinguistic Study on Homosexual and Bisexual Men in Bali)

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Abstract—In community, people may use different language variation accordance with their age, gender, education, profession, ethnic origin, etc. (Holmes, 2013). Many homosexual and bisexual men in Indonesia speak a language variation that they call *Bahasa Bencong/Banci* or *Bahasa Gay* (Gay language), a linguistic phenomenon based on the national language, *Bahasa Indonesia* (Boellstorff, 2004). This study aimed at investigating the linguistic features, derivation and function of language used by homosexual and bisexual men in Bali, Indonesia. Eight respondents involved in this study were selected through the snowball sampling technique. The data were collected by tape-recording respondents' conversation in natural settings and interviewing them. The findings revealed interesting facts of the features of gay language, particularly the lexicon. It was created in a very creative way with the semantic alteration to the original words. The new words they used were formulated by adding affixes to the morphemes or existing words. Other types of word formation found in the study including syllabic substitution, blending, vowel shift, backformation, borrowing, reduplication, clipping and acronym. Another interesting point from the lexical feature was the connotation through female name of a person or famous public figures which signify different meaning. In addition to the lexicon, the use of homophobic words were found relatively often during this study, in which they often call each other with homo or *banci* (transvestite). Feminine pronouns were also another prominent feature of gay language found in this study. They addressed each other by employing feminine pronouns and feminine names. Further, they also used "feminine technique" in the way they pronounce words. Most of them used the high-pitched tone and rising utterance-final intonation resembling women's intonation. In this study, it was also found that the gay language served many functions for its community and among those functions were as a secret language, an identity of the community and language that provided sense of similarity and belonging to the member of the community. The gay language also functioned to show humor and aided them to speak in a friendlier and fun way.

Keywords—*gay language; homosexual and bisexual men; linguistic features; word-formation; gay language function*

I. INTRODUCTION

In our daily interaction in the community, we may use different language variation accordance with our ethnic, gender, profession, age or even intention; and could also create a new language variation which might serves as a group

or community identification and/or belonging. Changes or variations may occur in grammatical rules, vocabularies (e.g. formation of new words or word substitutions), meanings, suffixes, the way to pronounce the words, etc. The new words have special meaning according to the applicable provisions of our group or community.

A numerous number of research on language and social class, language and ethnic origin or language and gender and so on (Couplan & Jaworski, 1997; Richards, Platts & Platts, 1997) have been conducted by academics around the world, but there is a small number of research conducted on homosexual-focused linguistic features or in other words gay language, especially in Indonesia. The reasons why there has not been much attention on gay language studies are that the society is homophobic towards gay men. In some countries, including Indonesia, a discourse on gay-related things is even considered as something disgracing and sinful, thus not many researchers are willing to conduct research on it in comparison with those in other countries in the world.

In the past 20 years, there were only a few number of research on gay speech conducted in Indonesia (Oetomo, 2001; Boellstorff, 2004) and these studies found that homosexual and bisexual men in Indonesia speak what they call as *bahasa gay*. It is a linguistic phenomenon based on the national language bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian). The *bahasa gay* is also known by gay and bisexual men and other Indonesians as *Bahasa bencong/banci* or *Bahasa binan*, a very closely related language variety (Oetomo, 2001). *Bencong/banci* is a nationwide terminology for male to female transvestitism which have a disparaging meaning.

Gay is a term refers to the people, practices and cultures associated with homosexuality. A gay person (i.e. especially man) is someone whose sexual orientation is to members of the same sex. Sexual orientation refers to a person's sense of identity based on those attractions, related behaviors, and membership in a community of others who share those attraction. Sexual orientation is closely tied to the intimate personal relationship that meet deeply felt the need for love, attachment, and intimacy. In brief, a gay person is a man who is romantically, sexually and emotionally attracted to men and

a bisexual is a person who attracted romantically, sexually or both to people of any sex or gender identity (APA, 2008).

Meanwhile, transgender is a broad term for persons whose gender identity, behaviors, expressions does not fit to that typically associated with the sex to which they were thought to be when they were born (Lev, 2004). Gender identity refers to person's internal sense and knowledge of being male, female, or something else. Gender expression refers to the way a person presents gender identity to others through behavior, clothing—including cross dressing, hairstyles, voice, or body characteristics (NCTE, 2016). The example of transgender is people who were assigned female at birth but identify and live as male and alter their bodies through medical intervention such as surgery to more closely resemble their gender identity are known as transsexual men or transmen (also known as female-to-male or FTM). In the term of sexual orientation, transgender people may be straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or asexual, just as non-transgender people may be (APA, 2011).

Previous research on *bahasa gay* (e.g. Oetomo, 2001 and Boellstorff, 2004) found that majority of the lexicon of *bahasa gay* derived from Indonesian and only few from local/indigenous language, such as Javanese language. Based on those findings, it is interesting to examine whether the gay and bisexual men in Bali use exactly the same *bahasa gay* as what was found in the previous research, or is the case different in Bali, in which there might be some substituting words come from Balinese language.

As one of the most famous tourist destinations in the world, Bali has always been very open to people from other parts of Indonesia and around the world. Bali is also considered as a friendly place; accepting people from different backgrounds—including those with different sexual orientation such as the lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender (LGBT). There are many tourists, including the LGTB group that spend their holiday in Bali and some of them even decided to stay and establish business in Bali. They mingle very well not only with other LGBTs in Bali, but also with the *straight* or heterosexual people. Although not all of them could live openly as gay / bisexual men due to personal or other reasons, but they could live comfortably well and safe in any area around Bali.

Based on those facts and reasons, a research on gay language used in Bali is interesting and merit to conduct. This study aimed at investigating the linguistics features and the variation of gay language spoken by homosexual and bisexual men in Bali. This research also aimed to explore the functions of gay language used by gay and bisexual men in Bali.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociolinguistics explores language in relation to society and examines the relation between language and social factors which include gender, social class, age, ethnic origin, and so on (Morgan, 2003). This means that it is concerned with language as used for communication amongst different social groups of people in different social situations (Georgieva, 2014). Social context recognizes that people use language based on social situation. Language which is delivered by the speaker has different meaning and intention. Examining the

way people use language in different social contexts provides a wealth of information about the way language works, as well as about the social relationships in a community, and the way people convey and construct aspects of their social identity through their language.

Akmajian, et al (2010) stated that human language is not uniform or fixed. All languages show internal variation in that actual usage varies from one speaker to another. In sociolinguistics a variety, also called a lect, is a form of a language used by speakers of that language. Variety includes different accents, different linguistics styles, different dialects and even different language which contrast each other for social reason (Holmes, 2013).

Hudson mentioned that (1981, p. 25) "the defining characteristic of each variety is the relevant relation to society – in other words, by whom, and when, the items concerned are used". Language variety is a general term that may be used in some societies. This term can be used to distinguish between the varieties of language or give the identification of the language and the user. In some speech community, they use variety of language when they speak with others according to the context and purpose. The term of linguistic variation refers to regional, social, or contextual differences in the ways that particular language is used (Nordquist, 2017). Most of this variation is highly systematic. The speakers of language make choices in pronunciation, morphology, word choice, and also grammar. For example, sometimes there are differences between the speech of men and women, different social classes, and differences between age groups.

Register is a variety of language used for particular purpose or particular social setting. Holmes (2013) stated that overtime the language of groups develops more and more characteristics which distinguish their communication from those of other group. Register is usually known only by people who used the words. According to Flores (2006) the term register refers to language of groups of people with common interest or jobs or the language used in situational associated with such groups.

Gay language refers to register because gay language belongs to a variation of language which used by certain speech community. This language uses words and expressions with additions and alterations in meaning aiming at creating and retaining its identity (Dang, 2013). It can be stated that gay language is distinguished by differences in vocabulary and being concerned with variation in language conditioned by uses, user and involved consideration of the situation or context of use.

Some researchers had conducted research on gay language such as Rosa (2016) analyzed the morphological characteristics of queer language in a state university in the Philippines. Gay men in Philippines speak the language that they invented, mixing English, Tagalog, Visayan and sometimes even Japanese. Gay men in the Philippines have their own rapidly shifting linguistic code known as *Swardspeak*. It has its dynamic and creative term because it does not conform itself on a single culture but allows more freedom to its speaker. It is original and creative in a manner that though it is taken from a local word. The use of gay language was firstly because to avoid having other people hear what they were talking about especially when it comes to sex.

Dang (2013) investigated the features and function of language used by Vietnamese gay men in Ho Chi Minh City especially their discourse. It was found that the Vietnamese gay men used five major characteristics including the derivational process that involve –i and suffixing and kh-prefixing, the use of taboo words, the use of feminine personal pronoun and female name in addressing each other. In term of functions, Vietnamese gay men use them in order to foster a sense of belonging to their gay community, conceal things from others, speak freely when they are around heterosexuals and encourage the freedom of self-expression among gay people.

Oetomo (2001) and Boellstorff (2004) conducted research on gay language in Indonesia and found that majority of the lexicon of *bahasa gay* derived from Indonesian and only few from local/indigenous language, such as Javanese language. Although some terms transform words from local languages like Javanese, at overall grammatical level gay language is always based on Indonesian. They found that Gay language was more than just a situational variety of language. However it might be considered a counter language of a counter society. A counter society is set up within a larger society as a conscious alternative to it. The counter language uses words and expressions in the dominant language of the dominant society, with additions and changes in meaning.

III. METHOD

This study was a qualitative research which employed focus group method for data collection. The sample of study was gained through purposive sampling technique. The population of this study was homosexual and bisexual men in Bali, Indonesia. The respondents of this study were those who agreed and gave their consent to participate in this study. There were a total of 8 respondents involved in this study.

Two instruments were used in this study. The first instrument was the tape-recording natural conversations of the gay and bisexual men in Bali. The second instrument was a list of open-ended interview questions for the gay and bisexual men in Bali. These interviews were also recorded.

The data were collected through observation and tape-recording the gay and bisexual men in Bali in their natural settings. In addition, interviews were also conducted through focus group discussion (FGD) with respondents in order to further investigate the linguistics features and gain more information to answer the research questions. Interviews were conducted in Indonesian to ensure their understanding of questions and allowed them to speak more freely and accurately.

The data were gained from 6 different tape-recordings, including the interview sessions. Each recording lasted for about 1.5 to 2 hours. The taped conversations were then transcribed for analysis and only the relevant specific forms of verbal interaction were transcribed and described. After that, the data were classified based on Miles and Huberman theory. Miles and Huberman (1984 in Sugiyono, 2009) stated there were three activities on data analysis: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

First, data reduction referred to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming the data that appear in the transcription. Since there was a big amount of data, it was needed to be classified based on the theory. In this research, the utterances spoken by the gay and bisexual men were categorized based on the word-formation theory.

Second, data display means that the data can be displayed in the form of table, chart, diagram, pictogram that provide a new way of arranging and thinking about the more textually embedded data. It makes easier to assembly information which permits conclusion drawing. In this study, the classified data was displayed in the form of table.

Finally, conclusion drawing involves stepping back to consider what the analyzed data mean and to assess the implication. The data were verified its reliability and validity, so that it can be taken the conclusion.

The data were then analyzed descriptively based on sociolinguistics and language variations theories (Hudson, 1981; Holmes, 2013; Nordquist, 2017) and previous related studies (Oetomo, 2001; Boellstorff, 2004; Cage, 1999; Dang, 2013; Rosa, 2016).

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Major Linguistic Features

1) Lexicon

Based on the taped conversations among the gay and bisexual men in Bali, the first noticeable characteristic of gay language of Bali is the use of lexical items. The lexicon is created in a very creative way and some even with the semantic alteration to the original words. The new words they used are formulated by adding affixes to the morphemes or existing words. Other types of word formation found in the study including syllabic substitution, blending, vowel shift, backformation, borrowing, reduplication, clipping acronym and connotation through the name of a person or public figure. The majority of words are based on the national language, Bahasa Indonesia, some are based on English and there is only one word found that is based on the indigenous language, Balinese.

The competence in using gay language includes not only the lexicon, but also the intonation, pragmatics and ideology about *bahasa gay* itself, however, the most noticeable is always the lexicon (Boellstorff, 2004). This lexicon is more than just a set of collection of new words; it is a set of patterned derivational processes, in which the *bahasa gay* similar to not only *prokem*, but also the *swardspeak* (gay language of the Filipino), *Polari* (gay language of the British) and the Vietnamese gay language. The lexicon was developed for use only in a gay social context, certain situational contexts and does not substantially affect the mother tongue of the speakers.

There are several ways in creating the Indonesian gay terms, most of which are the syllabic substitution. The syllabic substitution in the Bahasa Gay is generally implemented by retaining the first syllable of the standard Indonesian words and altering or modifying the last part of syllable, for example the word *emang* (indeed) is substituted with *ember* which the

original meaning in Indonesian is “bucket”. Another example is on the word *jahat* (bad, cruel, evil), in which the final consonant “t” is deleted and then replaced by a new syllable. *Jahat* then becomes *jahara* in Bahasa Gay term (see table 1).

TABLE I. SYLLABIC SUBSTITUTION IN BAHASA GAY

Bahasa Gay Term	Meaning	Replaces Indonesian Term	Original Meaning in Indonesian
endes; endol; endul	delicious	enak	delicious (neologism)
ember; embur; embi	indeed	emang	bucket (semantic shift)
gedong	big (usually used to refer to the size of penis)	gede	big
begin dang	just like that	begin tu	just like that (neologism)
kesin dang	come here	kesini	come here (neologism)
hamidun	pregnant	hamil	pregnant (neologism)
jahara	bad/evil	jahat	bad/evil
jelita	Ugly	jelek	lovely/prett y (semantic shift)
organda	person/people	orang	organda stands for organisasi angkutan darat = organization of land transportation
kampina	it refers to personality of someone who is not modern, narrow-minded, old-fashioned and having bad sense of fashion.	kampungan	ice cream brand – campina (semantic shift)
hombreng	homosexual	homoseksual	homosexual (neologism)
tinta	no	tidak	ink (semantic shift)
mawar	to want	mau	rose (semantic shift)
purit	pure (refers to someone who is completely/ purely gay and not a bisexual).	replacing English term “pure”	original meaning in English is “pure”

There is usually no semantic link between the substituted words and the original words and this semantic dissension is showing more the humor and creativity in Bahasa Gay. Examples are *organda* (land transportation organization) replacing *orang* (a person/people) and *mawar* (rose) replacing *mau* (to want).

The syllabic substitution happens not only on Bahasa Indonesia, there are also some terms created from English, such as *purit*, in which the original meaning in English is “pure”. In the gay term, *purit* refers to someone who is a pure/complete homosexual man, not a bisexual.

Sometimes the substituting word comes from a popular product name such as *kampina* (ice-cream brand campina) replacing *kampungan* (personality of someone who is not modern, narrow-minded and have old-dated/bad sense of fashion). The use of place name is also seen on naming the

name of hang-out places with geographic terms such as *Jalur Gaza*. In original, *Jalur Gaza* means the Gaza Strip, a self-governing Palestinian territory on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, however, in the Bahasa Gay spoken in Bali, *Jalur Gaza* is an area/street in Seminyak, where most popular gay clubs are located in Bali. Interview with the respondents did not yield any further information on why that specific location is named *Jalur Gaza*. However, we all agree that this name could be related to the fact that Gaza Strip is a conflict area, thus perfectly representing the image of gay clubs area – the area of conflict in which gay men are seen by the heterosexuals as troubled people or people with disorder and conflicts.

As seen on table 1, neologism and semantic shift are related to the syllabic substitution. Neologism belongs to the Indonesian term that is replaced by a form that share a similar first syllable but has no prior/original meaning of its own in Indonesian. Another process is the semantic shift, in which an Indonesian term is given a new meaning. Examples on neologism and semantic shift are further provided in the table 2 and 3.

TABLE II. NEOLOGISM IN BAHASA GAY

Bahasa Gay Term	Replaces Indonesian Term	Meaning
akika	Aku	I
apose; aposka	Apa	what
cucok	Cakep	handsome
dimandose; dimandoska	Dimana	where
lambreta	Lama	taking (time) too long
lesbiola	Lesbi	lesbian
malida	Malu	shy
pewong	Perempuan	female

TABLE III. SEMANTIC SHIFT IN BAHASA GAY

Bahasa Gay Term	Original Meaning	Meaning in Bahasa Gay
brondong	Popcorn	younger man
kucing	Cat	male escort / sex worker
meong	cat (vocalization of cat)	to have sex
bungkus	to wrap; to take-away some food	taking someone home (or other places such as hotel) for sex
kriting	Curly	effeminate manner

Another important derivational process which formulate many gay terms is the vowel shift and suffixation. This derivational process relates to the change of standard Indonesian words into gay terms by shifting the vowels and modify the suffixes. The most common suffixes are *-ong*, *-es*, and *-i* (Oetomo, 2001), however, other suffixes such as *-ang* is also found in this current study.

In the case of *-ong* suffix, the vowel of the immediately preceding the syllable of the lexeme is changed into *é*. Oetomo (2001) also stated than the same process occur with the *-es* suffix. Oetomo (2001) further claimed that the vowel shift and suffixation firstly appeared in Jakarta and areas most directly influenced by Jakartan dialect of Indonesia and might be derived from *prokem*. Although Bali is not an area directly influenced by the Jakartan dialect, but it is found that the gay language used by homosexual and bisexual men in Bali is

similar with those used in Jakarta. It is not a surprising fact because as a famous tourist destination, Bali has attracted many people of Jakarta to spend their holiday, work and even live in Bali, thus exposing the local gay and bisexual Balinese and non-Balinese who live in Bali with the Jakartan dialect and Jakartan *Bahasa Gay*. In addition, nowadays the mass media such as TV and social media such as *Facebook* and *Twitter*; and dating applications such as *Tinder* and *Grindr* also play a significant role in spreading this language.

TABLE IV. VOWEL SHIFT AND SUFFIXATION IN *BAHASA GAY*

Indonesian / Bahasa Gay Term	Meaning	New Bahasa Gay Term
Banyak	many, much, a lot	benyong
jalan-jalan	to go out; go around; hang out	jelong-jelong
Mahal	expensive	mehong
makan	to eat	mekong
kawin	to get married	kwong
kaya raya	very rich	keyong reyong
laki	man	lekong
sakit	sick; ill	sekong
mati	dead	metong
janda	widow; divorcée	jendes
gunting	to cut	gentes
ngangkang	the position of opening both legs	ngengkes
lonte	prostitute	luntang

In addition to syllabic substitution and suffixation with vowel shift, there are other minor word-formation processes in creating the *bahasa gay* vocabulary which were found in this study and among those are acronym, blending, clipping, reduplication, back-formation, connotation through the name of person and public figure, homophobic items and feminine pronouns. Boellstorff (2004) in his research mentioned about the acronym, however, other word-formation processes were not mentioned in his work, which possibly indicates that the other word-formation processes may did not appear or did not exist during his period of research and only later emerge as the language developed and more creativity come into place.

Blending is the word formation process in which parts of two or more words combine to formulate a new word whose meaning is often a combination of the original words (Kosur, 2014). Examples of *bahasa gay* vocabulary which formed through blending are provided in the following table.

TABLE V. BLENDING IN *BAHASA GAY*

Bahasa Gay Term	Original Meaning in Indonesian	Replaces Indonesian Term	Meaning
balon	balloon	banci salon	transgender/transvestite who works in a beauty salon.
bronis bakar	bronis = a sort of cake (brownies) bakar = grilled	bronis = brondong manis bakar = berbadan kekar	cute younger man with muscular body
bronis kukus	bronis = a sort of cake (brownies) kukus = steamed	bronis = brondong manis kukus = kurus – kurus seksi	sexy, skinny cute younger man

mabora	getting drunk together	mabuk rame - rame	getting drunk together
fubu	Original Meaning in English: two persons (through friendship or mutual fondness) engaged in sexual gratification without involving feelings, caring, commitment, etc.	Replaces English Term: fuck buddy	two persons (through friendship or mutual fondness) engaged in sexual gratification without involving feelings, caring, commitment, etc. (friends with benefit is the more polite term in English).

The acronym found in this study is formed by the word formation process, consisting of the first letter of each word and which is pronounce as full words. Example of acronym in *bahasa gay* is provided in the following table.

TABLE VI. ACRONYM IN *BAHASA GAY*

Bahasa Gay Term	Original Meaning in Indonesian	Replaces Indonesian Term	Meaning
TTM	being friends but wanting more, such as sex, etc.	TTM = teman tapi mesum	being friends but wanting more, such as sex, etc.

Other word-formation process found in the gay language spoken by homosexual and bisexual in Bali are clipping, back-formation and reduplication. In the case of clipping, the word is reduced or shortened without changing the meaning of the word (Kosur, 2014). Back-formation differs from clipping, in which the meaning or class of the original word is changed. Back-formation is the word formation process in which an actual derivational affix is removed from the base form of a word to create a new word (Kosur, 2012). Reduplication is a word-formation process in which meaning is expressed by repeating all or part of a word (Urbanczyk, 2017). Examples of clipping, back-formation and reduplication are provided in table 7, 8 and 9.

TABLE VII. CLIPPING IN *BAHASA GAY*

Bahasa Gay Term	Original Meaning in Indonesian	Replaces Indonesian Term	Meaning
versa (derived from English "versatile")	Original meaning in English: - embracing a variety of subjects - turning with ease from one thing to another - having many uses or functions	-	Able to perform the role and gain pleasure either in the "top" or "bottom" position when having sex.
leh uga	ok; quite good	boleh juga	ok; quite good

TABLE VIII – BACK-FORMATION

Bahasa Gay Term	Original Meaning in Indonesian	Replaces Indonesian Term	Meaning
bina	animal	binatang	Someone who has or date a “sugar daddy” (older man), in which everything he needs is usually provided by the “sugar daddy”.
cin	love	cinta	Addressing someone without calling the name. Usually used for addressing someone who is familiar / close, such as friends, long-term clients / customers, etc.

TABLE IX. REDUPLICATION IN BAHASA GAY

Bahasa Gay Term	Original Meaning in Indonesian	Replaces Indonesian Term	Meaning
remaja-remaji	teenager	remaja	teenager
jola-joli	to sell	jualan	Provide sex in exchange for money

The lexical feature that I really find interesting is creating new words by using female names of person or public figure that connote different meaning (see table 10). These female names are flexible and linguistically multi-functional. These names can be used with different parts of speech and function either as nouns, verbs or adjective. Let’s have a look at the following example of sentences of *Bahasa Gay*.

- The use of *hamidah* as an adjective.
Bahasa Gay : “Eh, *deyse hamidah?*” (deyse is you, hamidah is *hamil* in Indonesian and pregnant in English).
English : “Are you pregnant?”
- The use of *machica mohtar* as a noun.
Bahasa Gay : “*Udin mawar* nyampe tapi kena *machica mohtar* ciinnn...” (machica mohtar means *macet* in Indonesian and traffic jam in English).
English : “I’m about to arrive but I get stuck in a traffic jam”.

TABLE X. CONNOTATION THROUGH FEMALE NAMES OF PERSON OR PUBLIC FIGURES

Bahasa Gay Term	Original Meaning in Indonesian	Replaces Indonesian Term	Meaning
Betaria Sonata	an Indonesian singer	berak	to defecate
Brooke Shields	an American actress and supermodel	berak	to defecate

Hamidah (Wanda Hamidah)	an Indonesian actress and currently a member of the parliament	hamil	pregnant
Machica Mohtar	an Indonesian singer	macet	traffic jam
Debora	a female name	dubur	loose anus (due to performing anal sex / receiving penis penetration too often)
Lulu	a female name	lonte	prostitute
Maharani	a female name	mahal	expensive

This use of female names also manifests itself in the use of feminine personal pronouns in certain segments of gay-culture. Female names are usually the names that gay men give to each other, but sometimes these names are also chosen by themselves. They choose the names which they think can represent themselves and create certain image that they want for themselves. For example, the use of the name Dewi (Goddess) may give them the sense of being beautiful, elegant and praised by people. The name Dewi is often chosen by the Balinese gay and bisexual men and the name Ningsih is usually chosen by gay and bisexual men who are Javanese. Ningsih is widely known as a name of Javanese women.

On the use of feminine personal pronoun, it is found that the Balinese gay and bisexual men often address each other with the pronoun in Balinese “*weng*”. The complete form of *weng* is *luweng* which means woman. This pronoun is the only word that I find derived from the indigenous language, Balinese, during I conduct the research. An example of the use of this pronoun in the Balinese gay community is as follows:

Balinese : Eh, ke kija ci *weng*? Adi enggal-enggal?
English : Hey, where are you going girl? Why such a rush?

TABLE XI. FEMININE PERSONAL PRONOUN IN BAHASA GAY

Bahasa Gay Term	Original Meaning in Indonesian	Replaces Indonesian Term	Meaning
nek	grandma	nenek	woman
mak	mother	mamak	woman
weng	woman	luweng	woman

2) The Use of Homophobic Lexical Items

It is quite surprising that the gay and bisexual men in Bali use the word *homo* or *banci / bencong* (transgender) to call to each other quite often. The heterosexual people usually use the word *homo* and *banci/bencong* as pejorative terms for homosexuals and to mock men who are seen looking like gay or those who are looking rather feminine, behave and dress in an effeminate manner like the drag queens and transgender.

Although these words have derogatory connotation; hence none of homosexual and bisexual men like to be addressed with *homo* or *banci*, however, somehow these words are popular and widely used in the gay community in Bali. This phenomenon resembles those found in South Africa (Cage,

2003) and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (Dang, 2013). Cage (2003) called the use of homophobic lexical items as the linguistic process of reginisation.

All the respondents of this study reported that they often call each other by using the word homo or *banci* or *cong* (in complete: *bencong*) just for fun. These homophobic words function as humor among gay and bisexual men. They also stated that the “manly” gay and bisexual men are often use these homophobic words to call their gay and bisexual friends who behave in an effeminate manner or when they find these friends are busy gossiping about other people. They will say: “*dasar mulut banci!*” Somehow *banci* implies the personality of a person who loves to gossip and talk about others behind their back.

TABLE XII. HOMOPHOBIC LEXICAL ITEMS

Bahasa Gay Term	Original Meaning in Indonesian	Replaces Indonesian Term	Meaning
banci	transgender /transvestite (derogatory meaning)	banci	transgender /transvestite
cong	transgender /transvestite (derogatory meaning)	bencong	transgender /transvestite
homo	homosexual	<i>homoseksual</i>	homosexual

3) *The Use of Loan Words*

Many terms in gay language used by the gay and bisexual men in Bali are adopted from other languages such as English and local language Makasar and Javanese with little or no modification at all. In this study I find some terms that are adopted from English and examples of those terms are provided in table 13.

TABLE XIII. LOAN WORD

Bahasa Gay Term	Meaning
top	A person who gains pleasure from sex when in the position of being on the top or giving penetration of his penis into the anus of his sexual partner.
bottom	A person who gains pleasure from sex when in the position of being on the bottom or receiving the penis penetration in his anus from his sexual partner.
top lady	A gay or bisexual man who behaves in effeminate manner but act as a top when having sex

Although the term “top” and “bottom” in many gay-culture situations may represent their role in the relationship – who acts as the girl-friend and who act as the boy-friend, in which the “top” is usually the manly one and the “bottom” is usually the girly one; however this situation does not necessarily true to all gay or bisexual men relationships. The term is more representing their preferable position or on how they gain pleasure when having sex.

4) *Intonation*

Intonation is another interesting point of the feature of gay’s speech. The result from the taped-recorded conversations showed that they tend to lengthen final sounds

with the high-pitched tone and rising intonation which similar to the sounds produced by females. Boellstorff (2004) stated that this high-pitched tone and rising intonation are associated with the images of femininity and softness; images that somehow found in and expressed by many homosexual and bisexual men. Examples are illustrated below:

- a) *Ya ampun maaaaakkkk... lama tak jumpa! Kemana aja ciüüüinnn...???*
(Oh My God girl, I haven’t seen you for a long time! Where have you been girl?)
- b) *Akika sibuk ciüüünnnn...Kerjaan kantor benyong.*
(I’m busy girl. I have a lot of work).

The two examples illustrate how the gay and bisexual men in Bali usually talking to each other or to heterosexual people who tolerant to them. They lengthen the final sounds and use the high-pitched tone and rising intonation.

A. *Lexeme in Gay Language in Bali that Derived from Balinese*

In this research, the majority of lexemes / lexicons found are based on the national language, Bahasa Indonesia and some are based on English. There is only one lexeme found based on the indigenous language, the Balinese. The word *weng* is formulated through “clipping”, in which the original word is *luweng* and it means woman in Balinese. This is also an example of the use of female personal pronoun by gay and bisexual men in Bali.

B. *Function of Gay Language for Gay and Bisexual Men in Bali*

In this study, it is found that the gay language serves many functions for its community and among those functions are:

1) *Concealment (secret language)*

The religious intolerance and prejudice towards homosexuality and bisexuality have forced them consistently to have a second, concealed life. Living in a country where being LGBT is considered as a sin makes gay and bisexual men in Bali and Indonesia living their gay life inside the “closet” to avoid condemnation, discrimination or even persecution. They only live openly as gay and bisexual men when they are surrounded by people who are tolerant and accept them for who they are. To be able to exist and to live co-exist with heterosexuals, they need to be able to communicate secretly with each other without any fear of exposure.

Gay and bisexual men in Bali use this language to conceal things from others, to make the meaning inaccessible to those who are not belong to the gay and bisexual community. The language allows messages to be sent among gay/bisexual people in close proximity to people who are unaware to the real meaning of the verbal interchanges (Cage, 1999). For instance when they need to talk about something taboo or related to sex, they would definitely use the gay language. The language allows them to talk freely when they are around heterosexuals and encourage the freedom of self-expression within their community.

2) *Identity, sense of belonging and solidarity*

Gay language used in Bali resembles to language which arise in other anti-societies, which gives the sub-community

the sense of belonging, unity and solidarity (Halliday, 1978). The use of gay language gives the members of the community a mean to identify one to another as the member of the community and that they are belong to the community. The language forms a part of gays/bisexuals' identity and allows them to show his identity and self-image (Oetomo, 2001; Cage, 2003).

The gay language has become a "badge" of someone's identity in the gay community in Bali. Someone could use it as a way to ascertain the sexuality of some other people whose sexuality is ambivalent. By dropping some gay terms into the conversation, the listeners' reaction may provide an important information regarding the listener's sexuality. *Bahasa gay* in Bali is also a symbol of gay culture, thus through the acquisition of this linguistic register, the speaker automatically adopts a value system advocated by that culture. The speakers of *gay language* use the language in a specific cultural context to facilitate a successful verbal communication and provide them with the opportunity to choose a language variety which will give them a real chance to succeed in his interaction, outside their innate ethnic identity (Haarman, 1991 in Cage, 1999).

3) *Showing humor and friendliness*

The homophobic words found in the gay language spoken by gay and bisexual men in Bali, like "homo", *banci*, *cong / bencong* are used more for fun than anything else. Parody and self-irony for humorous effects are implicit in many of the lexical items of *bahasa gay*, especially the female names. The feminism element in *bahasa gay* used in Bali could be interpreted as an assertion by gay and bisexual men of their feminine identity. The lexical items are used in an effeminate manner for humorous effect (Cage, 1999). They do it for fun, to have a laugh.

4) *A social networking device*

Bahasa gay is usually used by the gay and bisexual men in Bali in a controlled environment where they feel safe to use it. These places include gay people's homes, gay clubs, beauty salon and the gyms – gays and bisexuals in Bali are well known for maintaining their body fitness and shape in gyms.

In the field of work and social networking, the gay language aids them to speak in a more friendly and humorous way not only with people in their community but also with heterosexuals, particularly their clients in the beauty salon or other hospitality fields. Using the gay language to talk to the heterosexuals creates a sense of relax, fun and triggers laughs, thus allowing them to mingle better with their clients. Although it seems quite safe to speak *bahasa gay* with their own clients, however, they remain cautious about the clients or heterosexuals that they speak to, because there are some people who simply cannot tolerate homosexuality. This makes *bahasa gay* is an informal register of a larger language(s), Bahasa Indonesia or English in this case (Cage, 1999).

V. CONCLUSION

This study has yield findings about features and functions of gay language used by homosexual and bisexual men in Bali, Indonesia. The majority of lexicons used are based on *Bahasa Indonesia*, some are based on English and there is only one lexeme based on Balinese language. The gay language is unique, under constant renewal and its terms are created in a very creative way. Creativity in creating and in the use of *bahasa gay* is a passage for the creative nature of many gay and bisexual men. The gay language allows speakers to outmaneuver each other verbally and entertain their listener at the same time (Cage, 2003). Within gay community in Bali, *bahasa gay* appears as an identity and register of belonging and solidarity. It also functions as concealment, a social networking device and to show humor and have fun.

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