

# The Use of Jargon in Whatsapp Chatting by UKI Toraja Students

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## Abstract

This research aims to describe the forms of jargon used by WhatsApp users among students at the Toraja Christian University in Indonesia. This qualitative research relies on data collected from WhatsApp users among students at Toraja Christian University. The data is gathered through (1) reading techniques and (2) note-taking techniques. The results of this research indicate that, in terms of form, the jargon used by WhatsApp users among students at Toraja Christian University consists of four forms: basic word forms, abbreviation forms, phrase forms, and acronym forms.

**Keywords:** *jargon, Whatsapp, students*

## Introduction

Language is a complex communication system used by humans to convey meaning, ideas, and emotions. Involving the use of symbols, words, and grammar rules, language enables humans to construct messages that can be understood by others. Beyond being merely a tool for communication, language serves as a medium for storing, transmitting, and acquiring knowledge.

The functions of language encompass expressive aspects, where individuals can articulate their feelings and thoughts; interactive elements, enabling social interaction and community formation; as well as informational components, used to transmit information ranging from facts to complex ideas. Additionally, language has prescriptive and creative dimensions and serves as a guardian of individual and group identity, as well as culture. Dynamic and ever-changing, language reflects societal evolution and is influenced by factors such as technology, globalization, and social context. With unique grammar rules and structures, language is at the core of human communication, playing a pivotal role in shaping thought, culture, and civilization.

One branch of science that examines language is sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics is a discipline within the field of linguistics that explores and understands the complex relationship between language and society (Chaer & Agustina, 2014; Ramadhan, 2020b, 2020a; Wijana, 2013). The main focus of sociolinguistics is to analyze how social factors, such as social class, ethnicity, gender, age, and social situations, influence the use of language by individuals and groups in various communication contexts (Dewi, 2019, 2020, 2022; Dewi & Rukuk, 2022).

This discipline examines language variations, including dialects, accents, and differences in word choice and sentence structures, often associated with social and cultural identities. Sociolinguistics also investigates the concept of code-switching, which is the transition between two or more languages or dialects (Dewi & Palimbong, 2022; Dewi, Pulung, & Muttalib, 2019) in a conversation or communication situation.

Moreover, sociolinguistics observes language changes over time and how these phenomena reflect social and cultural changes in society (Dewi, 2020, 2022). Language analysis in the sociolinguistic context can also provide insights into social hierarchies, stereotypes, and intercultural interactions.

With a broader approach, sociolinguistics not only addresses language variations and changes but also includes aspects such as language policies, multilingualism, and the impact of globalization on language diversity worldwide (Ramadhan, 2020b). As a crucial tool for understanding social dynamics through the lens of language, sociolinguistics makes a valuable contribution to analyzing the complexity of human communication in the continually evolving context of society.

Language variation occurs because speakers are not homogeneous, and also due to the diverse social interactions conducted by the community. Language becomes more diverse when used by a large number of speakers in a vast region (Wijana, 2013). In Sociolinguistics, there are four language variations, namely variations in terms of speakers, usage, formality, and medium. One of the language variations in terms of speakers is jargon. Jargon is a social variation used selectively by specific groups or communities for communication. Expressions used are often not understood by the general public or people outside the group or community.

In its use, jargon is indeed used by specific communities or groups. For example, the jargon used by mechanics, farmers, carpenters is different from the jargon used by educators, junior and senior high school students, and even university students.

Jargon can be studied or observed through both spoken and written language. However, in this research, the analysis is primarily focused on written language. Written language can be found in written texts in any media. In this study, jargon is analyzed through written texts found in WhatsApp chat conversations.

One of the users of the WhatsApp application is students from the Toraja Christian University. They use this application to communicate with each other (La'biran, Dewi, Muthmainnah, & Hasby, 2019). In their communication, they indirectly use various forms or language variations, one of which is jargon. They use jargon to facilitate sharing information about class schedules, assignments, and personal matters. They use these words to communicate with fellow students, and only those who understand the meanings of these words can comprehend their communication.

## **Method**

This study is of a qualitative nature (Lisabella, 2013). Qualitative research is a scientific research method that is descriptive, interpretative, and does not measure phenomena numerically (Prof.Dr.Sugiyono, 2020; Sugiyono, 2015). The qualitative approach aims to understand the meaning and context of a phenomenon, process, or event, as well as to explore and describe the complexity of relationships among the variables involved. In contrast to quantitative research, which uses numerical data and statistics, qualitative research collects data in the form of text, images, sound, or other non-numeric materials (Fiantika, 2022; Rukin, 2022; Yusanto, 2020).

The research data consists of language jargon used by WhatsApp chatting users among students at UKI Toraja. The data for the study is sourced from WhatsApp chatting users among students at UKI Toraja. The data collection techniques employed in this research include reading and note-taking techniques (Admin, 2022).

## **Discussion**

Jargon is the use of specialized terms or language specific to a particular group, profession, or community to enhance communication efficiency within their own scope. These terms often consist of words, phrases, or abbreviations that may not be familiar to those outside the group. The purpose of using jargon includes communicating more

efficiently within the group, creating identity within the group or profession, and conveying information with greater precision and accuracy. The language jargon used by WhatsApp chatting users among students at UKI Toraja is described as follows:

### Basic Word Form Jargon

Jargon in the form of base words is a term or phrase used in specific communication and originates from basic words without undergoing changes in form or additional affixation. One of the jargons in basic word form is evident in the word *maybe*. The jargon *maybe* is a basic word in English, which, when translated into Indonesian, means  *mungkin*  (perhaps). Among WhatsApp chatting users in the community of students at the Toraja Christian University, they prefer using the word *maybe* instead of the Indonesian equivalent. The students choose the word *maybe* to make their conversations more engaging by incorporating English language elements. They use this word to communicate with fellow students, where the meaning is understood only within the student community. Nevertheless, the jargon they use is not intended to be secretive.

Furthermore, another jargon in basic word form is evident in the word *wacana*. The jargon *wacana* originates from the Indonesian language and falls into the category of basic word form jargon. This is because the word *wacana* does not undergo affixation processes. In Indonesian, *wacana* means a complete unit of language realized in the form of a composition or a complete report, such as a novel, book, article, speech, or sermon. However, for WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University, the word *wacana* is interpreted as *just a story*. They use the term when they have plans that are not realized, remaining merely as stories. This jargon is employed in communication among students, and its meaning is known exclusively within the student community. Nevertheless, the jargon they use is not intended to be secretive.

In addition, there is also the jargon *tantik*. The jargon *tantik* originates from the Indonesian language and is derived from the basic word *cantik*. This jargon means (1) beautiful; lovely (referring to a woman's face), (2) beautiful in form and creation: for example, that table is very beautiful. In general society, to express the beauty of someone's face or the beauty of the form and creation of an object, they use the word *cantik*. However, for WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University, they use the word *tantik*. They use the term *tantik* to make their conversations more engaging. The word is used to communicate with fellow students, and the jargon they use is not intended to be secretive.

### Abbreviation Form

Jargon in the form of abbreviations refers to terms or phrases formed by taking the initial letters or a few letters from longer words or specific phrases. These abbreviations are often used by specific groups or communities to simplify or expedite their internal communication.

One form of abbreviation jargon is evident in the term KRS. The jargon KRS originates from three words: *Kartu* (Card), *Rencana* (Plan), *Studi* (Study). It is then written as *K-R-S*. This jargon is derived from the Indonesian language. For students at other universities, they might recognize the term *KRS* as an abbreviation for *Kartu Rencana Studi* (Study Plan Card). However, for WhatsApp chatting users, especially among students at the Toraja Christian University, the jargon KRS stands for *Korban Rayuan Senior* (Victim of Senior's Persuasion). They use this term when a friend or junior of theirs is involved in a relationship with a senior (whether it's in the dating

stage or already married). This jargon is used as a joke or playful banter. Students use this jargon to communicate with each other, where the meaning is known only within the student community, particularly among students at the Toraja Christian University.

Another form of abbreviation jargon is evident in the short form *q*. Jargon *q* is one of the jargons used by WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University. For the general public, the letter *q* is simply the 17th letter in the Indonesian alphabet. However, for WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University, the letter *q* is not just the 17th letter in the Indonesian alphabet; it has its own meaning, namely, it is another way of saying *aku* or *ku* (I or my). They use this jargon to communicate with fellow students, where the meaning of these words is known only within the student community.

Next, there is the jargon *gpl*. The jargon *gpl* originates from the Indonesian language and is an abbreviation for *gak pakai lama* (not using it for long). This jargon is formed from three words: *Gak* (not), *pakai* (using), and *lama* (long). It is then written and pronounced as g-p-l. This jargon falls into the category of letter-by-letter pronounced abbreviations. WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University use this jargon when waiting for something or someone to avoid a prolonged wait. They use this jargon to communicate with fellow students, where the meaning of these words is known only within the student community.

Another form of abbreviation jargon is evident in the short form *p*. Another form of abbreviation jargon is evident in the short form Another form of abbreviation jargon is evident in the short form Another jargon in the form of an acronym is "P." Another jargon in the form of an acronym is "P. Another jargon in the form of an acronym is "P. Another jargon in the form of an acronym is "P. Another jargon in the form of an acronym is "P. Top of Form

The jargon *P* originates from the word *Piu*, and it is then written as *P*. For the general public, the letter *P* is simply the 16th letter in the Indonesian alphabet. This jargon falls into the category of abbreviations written and pronounced letter by letter. WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University use this jargon to greet someone. This jargon has the same meaning and function as words like *hello*, *hai*, etc. They use this jargon to communicate with fellow students, and, of course, only those familiar with the meaning of these words can understand.

### Phrase Form

Jargon in the form of phrases refers to terms or phrases used in specific communication and have specific meanings within a particular group or community. These phrases may consist of several words forming a unit with a specific meaning understood by members of that group. Jargon in the form of phrases is often used to expedite internal communication and create group identity.

The use of jargon in the form of phrases is evident in *thank u*. The jargon *Thank u* is one of the jargons used by WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University. This jargon originates from English, namely *Thank you*, which means terima kasih in Indonesian. The jargon falls into the category of phrases as it consists of two words, Thank and you. They use this phrase to communicate with fellow students, and, of course, only those familiar with the meaning of these words can understand.

The use of other jargon in the form of phrases is evident in the phrase *mon maaf*. The jargon *mon maaf* is one of the jargons used by WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University. The jargon *Mon maaf* originates from the

phrase *Mohon maaf* (apologize). Students use this jargon to communicate with fellow students, and the meaning of the jargon is known only within the student community. Although it is only used among students, the jargon is not intended to be secretive.

### Acronym Form

The term acronymic jargon refers to terms or phrases formed from the initial letters of words that create a new word. Acronyms are often used to simplify or shorten longer expressions. Acronymic jargon can have specific meanings within the context of particular groups or industries.

The use of other jargon in the form of acronym is evident in the *on*. The jargon *on* is an acronym for *Online*. This jargon is used by WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University. While most people interpret the word *on* as being actively using social media such as Facebook, Instagram, etc., WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University interpret *on* as *masih melek* (which means still awake/not asleep). They use this jargon to communicate with fellow students, and the meaning of the jargon is known only within the student community.

Another form of acronym form jargon is evident in the *hadija*. The jargon *hadija* is another jargon used by WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University. The jargon *hadija* originates from four words *hati-hati di jalan* (be careful on the road). This jargon falls into the category of abbreviations in the form of a combination of syllables, transforming the phrase *hati-hati di jalan* into *ha-di-ja*, then pronounced accordingly. They use this jargon to communicate with fellow students, and the meaning is known only within the student community, particularly among students at the Toraja Christian University.

Another form of acronym form jargon is evident in the *semangka*. The jargon *semangka* is one of the jargons used by WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University. In Indonesian, the word *semangka* is interpreted as a round and large fruit, green and smooth, with juicy and sweet-tasting flesh. However, for WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University, this jargon is an acronym for *semangat kakak* (spirit, elder sibling). The jargon serves to provide encouragement to someone older. They use this jargon to communicate with fellow students, and only students, especially at the Toraja Christian University, understand the meaning of this jargon. Nevertheless, the jargon they use is not intended to be secretive.

The next use of other jargon in the form of acronym is evident in *mager*. The jargon *mager* is another acronym jargon used by WhatsApp chatting users among students at the Toraja Christian University. The jargon *mager* originates from the Indonesian language and is formed from two words: *malas* (lazy) and *gerak* (move). This jargon is an acronym as it combines initial letters written and pronounced like a regular word. The formation consists of two syllables: *ma* for *malas* (lazy) and *ger* for *gerak* (move). The jargon is used to express someone who is lazy or does not want to engage in any activity. This jargon is only used among students, particularly at the Toraja Christian University, where the meaning of the jargon is known only by them, and it is not intended to be secretive.

### Conclusion

Based on the data obtained and the discussion of research results, it can be concluded that the forms of jargon used by WhatsApp chatting users among students of

the Indonesian Christian University Toraja consist of four forms, namely (1) basic word form, (2) abbreviation form, (3) phrase form, and (4) acronym form.

The research on the use of jargon in WhatsApp chatting among UKI Toraja students concludes that there is a tendency towards the use of high-level jargon in their conversations. This jargon serves not only as a means of communication but also as a tool for group identification, fostering a sense of solidarity among group members. Students demonstrate the ability to adapt to the context of the conversation, switching between formal and informal language. Additionally, language creativity is evident in the innovation of new terms and phrases, reflecting cultural dynamics among them. The study also reveals that the use of jargon is not limited to the local scope but also reflects the influence of globalization and technology. UKI Toraja students respond to these changes by adopting new terms, often originating from digital and technological contexts. The most significant conclusion emphasizes that an understanding of the social context is crucial for interpreting the use of jargon, highlighting the importance of this study in linguistic and cultural contexts.

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