

## Colloquial Words in Indonesian Social Media

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47175/rissj.v3i2.436>

| Fauziah Khairani Lubis<sup>1</sup> | Syamsul Bahri<sup>2,\*</sup> |

<sup>1,2</sup>Faculty of Languages and  
Arts, Universitas Negeri  
Medan, Indonesia

\*[syamsul.bahri0401@gmail.com](mailto:syamsul.bahri0401@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

Colloquial words are usually found in the caption or status of social media users. It sometimes creates a confuse for the readers or society because it is just understood by certain community. This becomes a unique and an interesting one to be explored. This research aims to investigate more about colloquial words in Indonesian social media captions those are mainly utilized by young people. It was conducted by a descriptive qualitative method using the theory of colloquial speech, Yule (2010). The data was taken from the captions made by social media users, then identified and classified based on its types. Furthermore, the data analysis of colloquial words was done contextually and theoretically. The research findings showed that from 66 colloquial words data, Coinage had become the highest rate percentage in which it is used to show the uniqueness and a trend or style in a social media caption or status. The unique things and new trends are easier to follow by young people, especially in Indonesian social media. Whereas backformation and derivation become the most rarely percentage used in the caption of Indonesian social media.

### KEYWORDS

colloquial words; social media; sociolinguistics

## INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics is a field of linguistics that studies how people utilize language in their daily lives. Initially, sociolinguistics was known as language in society or sociology (sociology of language). "Sociolinguistics is that aspect of linguistics concerned with language as a social and cultural phenomenon" (Trudgill,1974). Sociolinguistics has long been recognized as numerous approaches to discuss the role of language in society and how people in society communicate with one another through their languages. The significant characteristic of a speech community is that its members share a common language (or range of languages) and the norms (or rules) for using that language appropriately in social situations.

With the different backgrounds of the speakers' language in various communities, there will be different kinds of language diversity that emerge as a result of the speakers' distinct situations and social stratification. Many factors of speech community divergence have been discovered in society. These distinctions impact the type of language they use to communicate. They must be aware of one another's positions. As a result, it is critical for speakers involved in certain speech situations to consider the language to be utilized. In multicultural cultures, language choice is usually influenced by social elements such as the number of people you are speaking with, the social context in which the communication takes place, and other considerations such as the function and topic of what is being discussed. In a heterogeneous culture like Indonesia, these are vital considerations to consider while choosing a language.

People utilize social media to express the reality and experiences they have had. Specific sentences that they express in the form of found sentences are not always in compliance with the regulations. As a result, we frequently come across sentences that sound unique to some people on various social media platforms. On the other hand, certain circles are already familiar with the language and utilize it. People can use whatever language they choose on social media, and the community agrees on that language. On social media, language usage is frequently discovered to be unique, and a select group of people may only comprehend these terms. The language is sometimes expressed in an unusual style, which causes readers to be perplexed when trying to understand it. Language development in society is exceptionally rapid, progressing, and changing daily. Language is adaptable and always accepts changes, making it easy to develop, as seen in various social media platforms such as Whatsapp, Facebook, and Instagram. For instance:

“ Dalam hidup ini kalo mau *tajir* kerja keras lah, tetapi jangan lupa dibarengi dengan doa. “

(In this life, if you want to be *tajir*, work hard, but do not forget to do it with prayer). This caption was found on the Instagram of a businessman who stated that hard work would make people rich. The word '*tajir*' in the caption is usually stated for someone who has a lot of wealth and lives in luxury, and has a big successful business in his life.

Some of the studies that have discussed the use of language in different situations are as follows: 1) The Acquisition of Colloquial Speech and Slang in Second Language Learners of English in El Paso, Texas, Bradford, Patricia Brannon (2010) ,aimed to analyze whether colloquial words can offer assistance understudies to move forward their talking ability within the setting of communication and how colloquial words offer assistance understudies to make strides their talking expertise based on teacher's evaluation within the every day classroom activity. 2) Youth Radio and Colloquial Indonesian in Urban Java, Manns, Howard (2014) ,investigated language regulations at two youth radio stations in Malang, East Java, and audience views of these restrictions. 3) Revisiting The Use of Expressive Colloquial Language for Creating A Comic Effect ( On The Basis of Short Humorous Stories), Abrosimova, Natalia A (2016) ,discussed the use of expressive colloquial language in the creation of a comedic effect using the example of short humorous stories. 4) WhatsApp with Social Media Slang? Youth Language Use in Dutch Written Computer-Mediated Communication, Verheijen, Lieke (2017) ,analyzed 110 student descriptions of interactions with the issue. It revealed that colloquialism strongly influenced understudy translations of work and instruction, solidifying vocational understandings of higher instruction and sustaining a direct viewpoint of callings. 5) The Utilize of Colloquial Words in Moving forward Students' Talking Through Teacher's Every day Appraisal, Hasanah, Dhia (2020), investigated on the off chance that colloquial words may offer assistance understudies create their talking aptitudes within the setting of communication and how colloquial words can offer assistance understudies make strides their talking aptitudes based on instructor appraisal in a day by day classroom movement. The qualitative method was used in this study, which included class observation, interviews, and rubric analysis. 6) Language Development of Slang in The Younger Generation in The Digital Era, Maulidiya, Rahmania, at all (2021) examined a slang language in Indonesia, particularly among the younger generation, and how it affects the Indonesian language in the modern digital era. This study employed a qualitative descriptive method, with a questionnaire serving as the primary source of information, followed by articles and other websites.

This research focuses on colloquial words in Indonesian social media such facebook, whatsapp and Instagram. The difference from the previous studies are the object or data and the analysis of the reseach.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociolinguistics is a study of language concerned with language as a social and cultural construct (Sumarsono 2009:3, repeated from Treudgill 1974s). This science is a contextual investigation of differences in the use of public language in natural communication. The essence of sociology is an objective study of persons in society, including institutions and social processes (Chaer, 2003). *Linguistics* is the study of languages or branches of science that investigate language as the object of study. Thus, *sociolinguistics* is an interdisciplinary discipline of research that investigates language in connection to its usage in society. Sociolinguistics is a discipline of linguistics that views or places language in its relationship with the user of that language in society (Wijana, 2006). This viewpoint fundamentally maintains that life is no longer lived as an individual but as a social society in human society. Furthermore, sociolinguistics is a language study with a social component (Nababan, 1993). *Speech events* are also defined in sociolinguistics as the continuance of linguistic interaction in the form of Speech involving two speakers and opponents of Speech.

Language is the primary means we form our lives (Hyland, 2004). Language is also utilized to express our thoughts, ideas, opinions, and feelings. Furthermore, Brown (1994: 5) said that combining the definitions of language provides the following composite definition: (1) Language is a systematic and productive process (2). Language is a collection of arbitrary symbols (3). The signals are mostly spoken, but they can also be visual (4). The sign has established meanings to which it refers; (5) Language is used for communication; (6). Language operates within a speech community or culture; (7) Language is crucial to human beings, yet it may not be confined to humans; (8) Language is acquired similarly by all humans - language and language acquisition share universal characteristics.

Typically, definitions merge around the thought that social media alludes to digital platforms that emphasize user-generated content or interaction (e.g., Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Terry, 2009). Social media are regularly alluded to by channel characteristics, either indicating message directionality (e.g., Kent, 2010) or using specific tools such as Facebook or Twitter to exemplify ways of engagement (e.g., Howard & Parks, 2012). Although numerous definitions exist, there is still a lack of a formal, concise, and universally agreed-upon definition of social media, particularly across disciplines (Effing, van Hillegersberg, & Huibers, 2011; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). A lack of a single definition can lead to different implications of a notion, making it challenging to generate a clear understanding to direct hypothesis and investigate (Hempel, 1966). Indeed, existing definitions of social media differ significantly in their complexity, concentration, and usefulness outside of their home discipline.

Some existing definitions are relatively straightforward, concentrating on the nature of social media message production. Russo, Watkins, Kelly, and Chan (2008), for example, described social media as "those that enable online communication, networking, and cooperation" (p. 22). According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media is "a series of Internet-based apps that build on the conceptual and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which permit the creation and trade of User Generated Content" (p. 61). Lewis (2010) stated that "social media" is fair a "name for advanced advances that permit individuals to put, through associated, make, and share content" (p.2). These definitions are troublesome

since they are easily applicable to other communication technologies like e-mail, leaving out the particular technological and social affordances that characterize social media.

Slang, or Colloquial Words, defined by Yule, alludes to words or expressions utilized rather than more commonplace terms by more youthful speakers and other bunches with particular interface. The word "slang" is derived from the Norwegian word "slengeord," which means "insult language" or "unofficial language variants," rather than "raw seasonal nature." Internal communication within a social group is meant for non-members who do not grasp the language. The use of simple words and expressions not deemed conventional in the speaker's dialect or language is the definition of colloquial Speech. Colloquial discourse is a nonstandard term prevalent among specific groups, including youth groups, college groups, jazz groups, etc.

A *colloquial Word* is a term used by a particular group or community. The meaning of colloquial words is only known by that group, which may be difficult for the other group to comprehend. When speaking to others, practically everyone uses colloquial words. Colloquial speaking or writing makes it easier for people to communicate their information to others. Teenagers and young people frequently employ colloquial words because they are upbeat, imaginative, and full of fresh ideas.

According to Yule (2010), there are numerous sorts of word production in colloquial Speech: a) coinage, b) borrowing, c) compounding, d) blending, e) clipping, f) backformation, g) derivation, h) acronyms, and i) multiple processes.

- a) Coinage is the creation of entirely new concepts that eventually become commonplace in the language. Coinage occurs frequently when commercial brands are named such as *Vaseline*, *aspirin*, *Xerox*, and *Kodak*. Eponyms are new words derived from the name of a person or location, such as *Fahrenheit* (from the German, Gabriel Fahrenheit) and *jeans* (from the Italian city where the type of cloth was first made). (Yule, 2010). Other examples are *nunya* means none of your business, *swag* means cool.
- b) According to Yule (2010), borrowing involves displacing words from other languages, including *cheesy* (Latin) means sentimental, *bae* (Danish) means baby or sweetheart, *croissant* (French), *lilac* (Persian), *dope* (Dutch), *pretzel* (German), *piano* (Italian), *tattoo* (Tahitian), and *yogurt* (Turkish).
- c) Compounding is the technique of combining two words into a single form (Yule, 2010), for example, *clap back* means responding to an insult with an equal or greater insult, *crossfade* means doubly inebriated, *get hip* means adopting a new trend, *high key* means obvious, *big mad* means very mad, *friend zoned* means when the person you like does not like you back and treat you as a friend
- d) The terms 'Ansos' and 'Jones' could be classified as blending, which is the combining of two distinct forms to create a single new term (Yule, 2010), such as *shlitty* (shitty and litty) means a good time, *telethon* (television and marathon) means watching television feels like a marathon, *yall* (you and all) means all of you.
- e) Clipping is a word-creation technique that involves removing one or more syllables from an existing word to generate a new one (Yule, 2010). In most cases, only one syllable is used in the word-formation process, for example, *pic* (picture), *urself* (yourself), *bout* (about), *brekky* (breakfast), *hankie* (handkerchief), *Aussie* (Australian).
- f) Backformation is a highly specialized type of reduction procedure. In most cases, one type of expression (usually an object) is reduced to frame another type of expression (normally an action word): *emote* (from "emotion"), *donate* (from

“donation”), *enthuse* (from “enthusiasm”), and *babysit* (from “babysitter”). (Yule, 2010).

- g) According to Yule (2010), the derivation is a process in which a word is generated by adding an affix and the resulting meaning and/or category differs from the underlying word. Inference or attachment, which is the path toward including a join, is one of the types of slang language word-development used on 1cak.com. Affixes are divided into three categories: prefixes, suffixes, and infixes. For example, *hottie* (hot and -ie) means a very attractive person, *kinky* (kink and -y) means an unappealing woman with a strange sexual preference.
- h) An acronym is a method that creates new words from the first letters or segments of a group of words (Yule, 2010). Acronyms are created by combining the underlying sounds or letters of a few or all of the words in a phrase or title and then reading them as a single word. For example, *LOL* (laugh out loud) means lots of laughing, *gf* (girlfriend), *OML* (Oh My Lord), and *WYD* (what are you doing).
- i) Through more than one-word formation process, multiple processes are producing some new words from old words (Yule, 2010). For example, *witchu* (with+you), *wig snatched* (wig+snatch+ed) means impressive/unimpressive appearance, *finna* (fixing+to) means planning something, and *dead dogs* (dead+dog+s) means deadass.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method to explore colloquial words in Indonesian social media. Qualitative research involves the analysis and interpretation of data. The data was the written expressions stated in the caption or status found on social media users. Qualitative Method assists in comprehending the social environment and is used for identifying the problem and its interpretation using theory and for demonstrating the quality of the result (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

In collecting the data, the research data was taken from the captions on Indonesian social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and Whatsapp. The data are written in specific captions on Indonesian social media that contain colloquial words. The data is categorized by applying Yule's theory about the types of colloquial words. Furthermore, the data analysis of colloquial words is done contextually and theoretically.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1.** The Percentage of Colloquial Words in Indonesian Social Media

| No.          | COLLOQUIAL WORDS | Number    | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1.           | Coinage          | 22        | 33             |
| 2.           | Borrowing        | 7         | 11             |
| 3.           | Compounding      | 3         | 5              |
| 4.           | Blending         | 13        | 19             |
| 5.           | Clipping         | 4         | 6              |
| 6.           | Backformation    | 2         | 3              |
| 7.           | Derivation       | 1         | 2              |
| 8.           | Acronyms         | 9         | 14             |
| 9.           | Multiple Process | 5         | 7              |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |                  | <b>66</b> | <b>100</b>     |

### **Coinage**

a. 'Uwu'

“Nikah itu bukan hanya *uwu-uwu* saja, semua butuh tanggung jawab yang harus dilakukan dengan Lillahi ta'ala.”

(Marriage is not just *uwu - uwu*, it needs responsibility that must be done with Lillahi ta'ala)

This statement conveys that marriage is not only for romantic or making love. However, the marriage also needs responsibility to survive the family life. The Word *uwu* in this caption means romantic or making love. This is used among teenagers on Indonesian social media to show the uniqueness and trend in a social media caption or status.

### **Borrowing**

a. 'Cuan'

“Nyari *cuan* seharian, ngabisinnya semenitan.”

(Looking for *cuan* all-day, spending it only in a minute)

This statement shows the public that earning money (*cuan*) by working hard a long full day but wasting it in a short time on many needs and wishes in our lives. The Word that can be borrowed from the Tiongkok language means money. It has become a trend among business people, especially the young ones. The worlds of trading, forex, and other businesses usually use the Word *cuan* as a profit and something to be boasted off or grateful for.

### **Compounding**

a. 'Pukul rata'

“Yok bun di borong baju impor premium harga merakyat 50 ribu aja *pukul rata* ya, yang mau merapat.”

(Come on, wholesale imported premium clothes for only 50 thousand *pukul rata*, those who want them, please come closer)

An online fashion store on Facebook offered clients the lowest price for every brand or product. The Word *pukul rata* means implementing the lowest price for all fashions. Indeed, *pukul rata* is from two words, *pukul* means hit, and *rata* means flat. In Indonesia, it is used as compound words, and it has become one-word *pukul rata*.

### **Blending**

a. 'Pansos'

“Karena banyak yang *pansos* dan akhir-akhir ini juga banyak yang memposting postingan yang gak jelas. Maka silahkan masuk ke group Arbshop yang baru ya.”

(Because many *pansos* and lately also many who post contents that are not clear. Then please join the new Arbshop group)

So many people expose useless things to show their existence on social media to the public. One of the users asks the other people to join a new group, "*Archbishop*," for a specific business. It is better done than posting useless things just for their famous only with strange conduct. The Word *pansos* is derived from *panjat sosial*, which means an effort to do just for getting fame on social media.

### **Clipping**

a. 'Halu'

“Andaikan *halu-haluku* terwujud betapa masha Allah, Subhanallah, Allahu akbarnya hatiku.”

(If my *halu* come true, how masha Allah, Subhanallah, Allahuakbar is my heart)

One of the social media users states his gratefulness to God if his imagination becomes true or reality. The Word *halu* is actually from *halusinasi* (hallucination or imagination), and teenagers much use it on social media to express their imagination on unreal thoughts.

### **Backformation**

a. 'Ngolah '

“ Sabtu ceria, *ngolah* lahan depan rumah “

(Happy Saturday, *ngolah* the land in front of the house)

One of the social media users informed the public that we should do helpful things on the weekend or a lovely Saturday, such as renovating or making a beautiful garden in the yard that can be useful for the family. The Word *ngolah* (verb) is from the Word *olahan* (noun). It is used in this statement as a verb to inform the public to do the valuable thing.

### **Derivation**

a. 'Ngebadut '

“ Uдах capek-capek *ngebadut*, ternyata cuma jadi teman gabut.”

(I am tired of *ngebadut*, it turns out that we are just friends)

Someone on social media exposed what he had ever done, *ngebadut* means making a funny thing to his friend for a long time in a particular condition, but finally, he realizes that he accompanied and only committed his sadness. The word *ngebadut* is from *nge+badut*. It means to make a funny thing to entertain or erase other people's sadness.

### **Acronym**

a. 'CBL '

“ CBL CBL CBL, akhirnya aku menemukan dress simple tapi mewah banget.”

(CBL CBL CBL, finally I found a simple dress but so elegant)

A woman on social media exposed her happiness by finding what she wished on a dress that impressed her by saying CBL CBL CBL = Cantik Banget Loh (Very beautiful). The Word CBL stands for Cantik Banget Loh means very beautiful. It has become a trend in social media for teenagers to express their feeling about something very beautiful and impressive to the public.

### **Multiple Process**

a. 'Bershopping '

“ Selamat *bershopping* dengan gembira bersama D’Rose Hijab.”

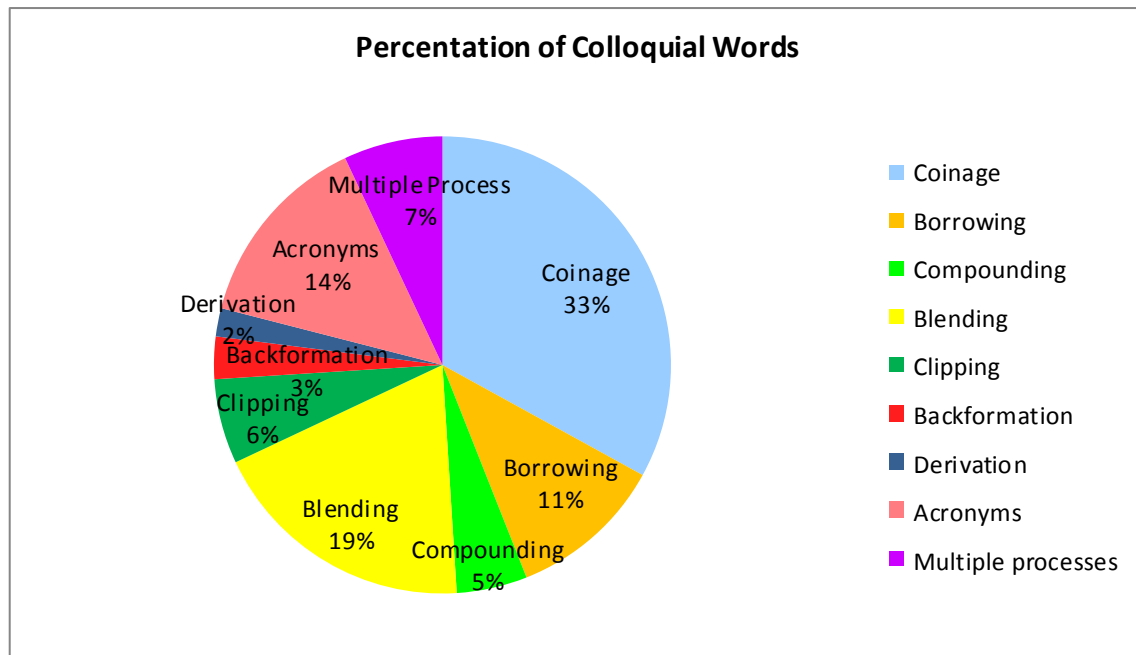
(Happy *bershopping* with D’Rose Hijab happily)

This statement informed and asked the people to go shopping happily in D’Rose Hijab to buy many kinds of fashion or hijab. The Word *bershopping* is from *ber+shopping*, which means do shopping in a crowd of many people in a certain mall or boutique.

### **CONCLUSION**

The existence of new words among young Indonesians is a natural thing considering that Colloquial words usually exist because social relations between youths are getting closer. Young people who use standard language in their social media captions will seem stiff and too formal. Although the use of these colloquial words violates the ethical rules of the Indonesian language, as long as a specific group or community still understands the

meaning of the language, the use of nonstandard language is still acceptable in certain situations.



The data indicate that Coinage has become the highest rate for colloquial words. It is used among teenagers on Indonesian social media to show the uniqueness, trend, and style in a social media caption or status. Whereas backformation and derivation become the most rarely used colloquial words arise in the caption of Indonesian social media.

## REFERENCES

- Abrosimova, N. (2016). *Revisiting The Use of Expressive Colloquial Language for Creating A Comic Effect (On The Basis of Short Humorous Stories)*. Rusia: Kazan Federal University
- Brannon, P. (2010). *The Acquisition of Colloquial Speech and Slang in Second Language Learners of English in El Paso*. Texas: Bradford.
- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Upper Saddle River, NJ Prentice-Hall. San Francisco: Pearson Longman.
- Chaer, A.(2003). *Psikolinguistik Kajian Teoritik*. Jakarta: PT.Rineka Cipta.
- Effing, R., van Hillegersberg, J., & Huibers, T. (2011). Social media and political participation: Are Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube democratizing our political systems? In E. Tambouris, A. Macintosh, & H. de Bruijn (Eds.), *Electronic participation* (pp. 25–35). Berlin, Germany: Springer.
- Hasanah, D. (2020). *The Use of Colloquial Words in Improving Students' Speaking Through Teacher's Daily Assessment*. Bandung: Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia
- Hempel, C. (1966). *Philosophy of natural science*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Howard, P. N., & Parks, M. R. (2012). Social media and political change: Capacity, constraint, and consequence. *Journal of Communication*, 62, 359–362.
- Hyland, K. (2004). *Genre and second language writing*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Khairani Lubis, Fauziah., & Bahri, Syamsul. (2021). Colloquial Speech of University Student's Utterance. *Southeast Asia Language Teaching and Learning Journal*, 4, 01-10.



- Lewis, B. K. (2010). Social media and strategic communication: Attitudes and perceptions among college students. *Public Relations Journal*, 4(3), 1–23.
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53, 59–68.
- Kent, M. L. (2013). Using social media dialogically: Public relations role in reviving democracy. *Public Relations Review*, 39, 337–345.
- Manns & Howard. 2014. *Youth Radio and Colloquial Indonesian in Urban Java*. England: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group
- Maulidiya, R. (2021). Language Development of Slang in The Younger Generation in The Digital Era.
- Nababan, P.W.J. (1993). *Sociolinguistics: ‘Sebuah Pengantar’*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka.
- Terry, M. (2009). Twittering healthcare: Social media and medicine. *Telemedicine and e-Health*, 15, 507–510.
- Russo, A., Watkins, J., Kelly, L., & Chan, S. (2008). Participatory communication with social media. Curator: *The Museum Journal*, 51, 21–31.
- Trudgill, & Petter. (1974). *Sociolinguistic: An Introduction*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Book Ltd.
- Verheijen, L. (2017). WhatsApp with Social Media Slang? Youth Language Use in Dutch Written Computer-Mediated Communication, pp.72-101. Ljubljana University Press.
- Wijana, I.D.P. (2006). *Sosiolinguistik: kajian teori dan analisis*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Xiang, Z., & Gretzel, U. (2010). Role of social media in online travel information search. *Tourism Management*, 31, 179–188.
- Yule, G. (2010). *The Study of Language*. 4th Edition. New York: Cambridge University Press.