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DIGITAL LINGUISTIC CREATIVITY (DLC) IN INDONESIAN GEN Z INSTAGRAM CAPTIONS: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract: Indonesian Generation Z (Gen Z), born between 1997 and 2012, grows up in the era of digital platforms shows creative linguistic patterns for using English and communicative interaction. This study investigates the distribution of Digital Linguistic Creativities (DLC) captions, which comprise orthographic, lexical, morphological, and semiotic categories, from 124 Indonesian Gen Z Instagram users whereby the DLC captions function as sociolinguistic resources for identity construction and stance taking to interpret sociolinguistic landscape as well. Employing descriptive qualitative design, this study examines the phenomena which relies on text and image by analysing 124 captions posted from 2025 to 2026. The findings show that the most frequent captions are orthographic creativities (43%), followed by lexical creativities (30%) that are the second most frequent captions, followed by semiotic creativities (25%) that are the third most frequent captions, and the least frequent captions are morphological creativities (2%). Orthographic creativity becomes the most frequent captions posts because of various linguistic patterns to attract particular attention. Meanwhile, morphological creativity becomes the least frequent captions posts due to the need of word formation analysis. With regard to sociolinguistic landscape, the finding of identity construction reveals that the existence of Instagram users in their online communities is not merely as personal identity but also group identity. The finding of stance taking that includes epistemic and affective stance reveals that Instagram captions posts are created based on knowledge driven-action, inter subjectivity, and emotional expression.
Keywords: *digital linguistic creativity; generation Z; caption; sociolinguistic landscape; identity; stance taking.*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the cutting edge of technology, including digital technology and social media, has fundamentally changed the way young people to shape their social identities. One of the social media such as Instagram has currently been dominated by young people to express themselves (Hidayat, 2026) whereby Instagram provides strong visual content platform to build emotional engagement, evoke sympathy, and public attention towards social issues. (Savitri & Triyono, 2025) by building friendship such as uploading photos, video, and writing captions to show their existence on social media (Simorangkir, 2021). Thus, in Indonesia, the use of Instagram has been growing since it enables to facilitate the users not only to gain information but also share their personal experience and construct their existence as well.

In Indonesia, Instagram is widely used by a majority of Indonesian Generation Z (Gen Z) since 80 percent of respondents on the survey consume Instagram platforms to obtain information and news which mostly contain visualized short news content formats (Septiana et al., 2024). Gen Z, who was born between 1997 until 2012, dominantly participates on the digital communication (Chen & Ha, 2023) due to their roles of the key agent of changing social experiences and technological immersion for new creative linguistic patterns (Jabeen et al., 2025). Gen Z engages in self-disclosure to express their personal activities, innovation, and achievement as they have good relationship with their friends in their social media

(Sari et al., 2025). In addition, Gen Z, as digital natives, becomes Indonesian national identity agent since they often post traditional and cultural symbols on their social media to introduce Indonesian national identity (Putri, 2026), thereby involving their habits in digital platform, multimodal interaction, and global information flows (Chen & Ha, 2023). As a result, social media allow Gen Z to establish their personal cycle spaces to shape their identity as digital natives.

Furthermore, Instagram provide platform with not only for social media but also English proficiency spaces. According to Lestari & Vianty, (2026) technology use can be integrated into English language learning since the technology accommodates the learners with meaningful opportunities and interactive, authentic resource to develop English proficiency. (Hasani et al., (2025) asserts that Instagram accommodates the platform that advocates teenagers to empower their vocabulary acquisition as the platform provides infographic, short videos, and educational posts in English, thereby encouraging language learning to enhance their English-speaking skills due to its accessibility for getting in touch with native speaker and obtaining authentic materials in the community (Khasanah, 2023). Thus, in Indonesia, Instagram can provide Gen Z users with not only digital communication but also English proficiency platforms.

The linguistic landscape of social media enables the users to gradually shape their local dialects since their Indonesian is often occupied with English slang and colloquialism. The language on the social media equips Gen Z, from various cultural identities, with linguistics diversity to facilitate their personal expressions and share their similar cultural backgrounds (Alyani et al., 2025). The omnipresence of Instagram has appealed to social media users to interchange their paradigm shifts in their communication, transcending geographical regions, and cultural boundaries. A myriad of Instagram users germinate in the field of their language use because of the ubiquitous spread of these social media platforms (Daulay et al., 2024). Consequently, language variety and informal language are constructed in the language use on social media because social media can change the way individual communicate (Rijal et al., 2022). Additionally, the use of Instagram lets the users encounter language shift in English linguistic features such as lexical, phonological, orthographic and code switching towards Indonesian because of the linguistic interferences in linguistic landscapes and cultural nuances (Lisdayani, 2025). This evidence has shown that the Instagram use can provide Indonesian Gen Z users with digital communication spaces, English proficiency media, linguistic feature shift, and cultural spaces as well.

Digital Linguistic Creativity (DLC), widely known internet or online linguistics, is the innovative technology by incorporating social facets such as textual, written, spoken, visual, and signal linguistics elements into technological facets such as social media platforms (Crystal, 2011). Digital linguistic spaces accommodate social media users to lead them to new linguistic forms since the platform equips them with novel trends and emergent forms of communication (Kasap et all., 2025). Thereby functioning to display mental and social structures by constructing and changing social reality (Gnach et all., 2022). Additionally, the platforms supply the users from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds with informal language practice transformation to individual and community spaces (Babayiğit. M, 2025). Apparently, the integration social into technological facets on the internet linguistics engages Gen Z users to modify a new linguistic creativity.

Digital linguistic platforms in this study are identified according to four categories which encompass orthographic, lexical, morphological, and semiotic creativities as these categories are prevalently found on the captions that are posted by Indonesian Gen Z public figure Instagram users. Orthography refers to the linguistic creativity for standardized writing system of a language. However, digital linguistic provides the users with language changes from standard to nonstandard of linguistic features such as spelling, capitalization, and exclamation marks to convey special effects. For example "*Read eBook!*, as nonstandard linguistic feature, that contains italicized capital letters and exclamation mark, is to call an action. (Crystal, 2003; Condorelli, M., & Rutkowska, H. 2023). Moreover, speech visual representation on the caption allows the users to their autonomous linguistic learning (Hedge, T. 2000; Aloufi, A. 2021).

Previous study showed that social media developed into a dynamic space of linguistic creativity for Indonesian youth since they constructed various stylistic features such as acronym "geemmoooy", instead of "gemoy" (Hasjim et al., 2026). Similarly, Lisdayani, (2025) found that Gen Z Instagram' post ' Pliz" instead of " Please" has demonstrated their stylistic linguistic

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interference in their orthographic creativity. These studies have shown that digital linguistic furnishes Gen Z Instagram users to not only construct linguistic features but also influence their native to foreign language in their orthographic creativities.

Lexical refers to linguistic creativity for examining lexical words by lexicalizing particular meaning where the meaning contains denotative regarding literal meaning to relate between word and property, and connotative related to technical meaning (Murphy, M. L. 2010). Kreidler (1998) defines four types of connotative meanings including (1) stylistic to convey speakers' attitude, (2) emotional to convey speakers' emotion, (3) evaluative to show approval and disapproval, and (4) expressive to convey the degree of intensifying speakers' emotional.

Murphy, M. L. (2010) classifies several new lexicalized constructions covering (1) coining by inverting meaningless sound in a new word such as "Kodak", (2)derivation by adding affixes in a word such as" obey" into "disobey", (3) compound by joining two existing words such as 'bluebell",(4) blending by combining parts of two words such as "br" instead of "breakfast",(5) clipping by shorting an existing word such as "flu" instead of "influenza," (6)borrowing by adopting different language words such as :akun" instead of "account," (7) acronyms by creating a word into a phrase such as "ASAP" instead of "as soon as possible. Recent study found that Indonesian Gen Z Instagram posts " bucin" instead of "love slave"on their captions has shown their newly lexicalized constructions in clipping- acronym forms (Hasjim et al., 2026). Likewise, study reported that Gen Z Instagram post "flexing" instead of "show off" has shown their language changes in linguistic structure and meaning feature (Adiningsih et al., 2026). Therefore, these investigations have revealed that digital linguistic allows Gen Z Instagram users to lexicalize words that can generate language change in their lexical creativities.

Morphology refers to linguistic creativity for the internal structure of words regarding systematic word meaning and morpheme combination since the structures are constructed by lexemes, word-forms, affixes, root, morphemes, and allomorphs (Haspelmath, M., & Sims, A. 2010). This feature examines interacted morphemes to create meaning such as "walked" and "walker" which has different meanings of each (Yultisa et al., 2024). Previous study revealed that Gen Z Instagram posted "SelfLove:" and "GreenLife" on their captions as a result of compounding words as their morphological constructions (Arifah et al., 2026b). Similarly, Rahayu & Anis, (2026) study showed that Gen z constructed linguistic innovation and strategy as they modified their morphological process constructions in borrowing language such as "people power" and conversion such as "viral," (Rahayu & Anis, 2026). Thus, these findings have revealed that digital linguistic enables the Gen Z Instagram users to construct compound words and adopt English words in their morphological creativities as well.

Semiotic refers to linguistic creativity for understanding signs such as words, images, sounds, and gestures in that this feature examines the models of signs such as icon to show similarity, digital and analogue to display technological equipment (Chandler, D. 2003), Emoji stickers are currently used in digital technology that are available in android, iPhone, and WhatsApp applications. The need of semiotic feature on internet linguistics is due to the lacks of internet exchanges such as facial expression, gesture, and body posture to moderate social relationship. Crystal, (2011) states that Emoji usages are mainly categorized into primary and secondary functions. The primary functions contain three linguistic emojis such as (1) expressive to convey emotional expression (Dresner & Herring, 2010), (2) interpretative to interpret message's indirect (Dewi, 2025; González-Ibáñez et al., 2011) and (3) referential to replace the writer's wish (Cramer et al., 2016; Dewi, 2025). Meanwhile, the secondary functions contain five linguistic emojis such as (1) relation to maintain relationship (Beißwenger & Pappert, 2019; Dewi, 2025; Dresner & Herring, 2010), (2) politeness to soften face-threating speech act (Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. 1987); Dewi, 2025), (3) emphatic to strengthen emotional value of a message (Dewi & Sukanton, 2025; Marcoccia, M., & Gauducheau, N. 2007); Dewi & Sukanton, 2025), (4) structural to separate, frame, and punctuate by combining clause with expressive, interpret and referential emoji (Markman, K. M., & Oshima, S. 2007; Dewi & Sukanton, 2025), (5) aesthetic to make message more attractive by combining decorative element with referential emoji (Dewi & Sukanton, 2025; Escouflaire, 2021)

Recent study revealed that emojis provided Gen Z Instagram users with significant contribution on their social media which have shown their various emojis (Dewi, 2025). Likewise, Opoku-Fofie & Quarcoo, (2026) study found that Gen Z Instagram posts "Please can we have the PDF or slides "

which shows politeness instead of representing prayer has demonstrated the emoji meaning shift in emotional expression towards complex semiotic symbols. Other study found that Gen Z Instagram's post "kak plis… aku kira umur 14 😔" for emotional states instead of expressing age for physical condition has shown multiple functions of emoji for non-verbal expression, emotional conveyance, and message comprehension (Antartika et al., 2025). Hence, these studies have demonstrated that digital linguistic allows Gen Z Instagram users to utilize semiotic not only create not only meaning shift but also multiple meaning.

Sociolinguistics involves speech community that highlights social group and social network whereby social group refers to the member that has similar and coherent speech characteristics (Wardhaugh, R. 2006; Susanti, 2024). On the other hand, social network pertains to adopted speech pattern to understand particularly embedded language on social media (Naibaho, 2020). Consequently, people in the community enable to use their mutually accepted language to create communicative competences (Susanti, 2024). This interaction can establish language variation which not only generates linguistic differences but also constructs and performs identity such as dialects, social registers, and ethnic varieties (Spotti, 2025). Sociolinguistic landscape is to interpret social interaction that refers to identity construction and stance. Identity is moulded through culture, particularly, language that can invest itself in various meanings (Harrison, D. A., et all.,1998; Lifrieri, V. 2008). On the other hand, (Joseph, J. E. 2004; Lifrieri, V. 2008) called "identity of identity' as it is a frame of reference to identify an entity by recognizing physical visual such as social and behaviour through directly observable and the cognitive such as abstract and mental by phenomena inference. Therefore, the two points view imply that identity is generated either from language or observation to obtain inferences of each concept.

Consequently, the relationship between an individual and members of particular ethic group to share a common history and language gains understanding of the world build cultural identity. (Darvin, R., & Norton, B. 2019; Alshehri, 2020), thereby producing several identities that are fragmented, dynamic, and changeable in interactional settings (Wodak, R. 2012; LI Peng, 2024). Identity is formed based on social identity theory or identity theory whereby social identity theory creates the process, called self-categorization process, by classifying itself into other social category (Turner, et all., 1987; Stets, J.E. & Burke, P.J. 2000). Meanwhile, identity theory produces the process which is called identification (McCall, G. J., & Simmons, J. L. 1978); Stets, J.E. and Burke, P.J. 2000), however, each process enables to form identity. Subsequently, social identity leads individual aware of where they belong to as it contains individual's self-concept for their belonging to a social group (Tajfel, H. 1974; Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. 2005).

Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005) explains that identity refers to the social positioning of self and other that involves intersubjective identity construction within local interactional context where its focus on both the details of language and the workings of culture and society, thereby producing intersubjective rather than individual construction due to identity as a centrally linguistic phenomenon. Therefore, identity is intersubjectively produced within linguistic phenomenon that occurs as a result of not only person's language use but also cultural, and society interactions as well in local interactional context.

Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005) outline five identity principles that comprise the emergence, positionality, indexicality, relationality, and partialness principles. The emergence principle deals with relationship between identity and language use that reflects individual's internal mental state whereby the emergence of identity is regarded as product rather than pre-existing linguistic source and other semiotic practices to form social and cultural phenomenon. The positionality principle relates to the correlation between social behaviour and macro identity categories such as age, gender, and social class; meanwhile, micro identity is gradually shaped in the interaction. Three elements in the interactional position contain (a) the categories of macro-level demographic, (b) the position of local and ethnographic culture, (c) the specific stances of temporary and specific interaction and the roles of participant. The indexicality principle pertains to the creation of semiotic links between linguistic forms and social meanings (Duranti, A., & Goodwin, C. 1992; Silverstein, 1985; Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. 2005). Several indexical processes comprise (a) mention of identity categories and labels, (b) implicatures and presuppositions regarding one's own or others' identity position, (c) evaluative and epistemic orientations t as well as interactional footings and participant roles, (d) the use of linguistic structures and systems that are ideologically associated with specific personas and

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groups. The relationality principle concerns with the dependence of identity acquisition that requires other identity position and other social actors. This principle constructs intersubjectivity through complimentary relations including similarity or difference, genuineness or artifice, and authority or delegitimacy. The partialness principle refers to the relationship between contextual situation and ideological configuration of self and other. This principle is constructed from part intention in part habit and less than fully conscious based on several parts of an outcome of interactional negotiation, other perception, an effect ideological processes and material structures thereby shifting in both interactional and discourse context.

Furthermore, Identity on social network is formed based on three dimensions including technical by storing digital memory, social by facilitating distance communication, and cognitive, and cognitive is by displaying self-images (Reda, 2024). As a result, the integration social identity into the dimensions of social network allows to form digital identity where the person has a chance to share their self- images. Previous study has shown that language use is not only means of communication but also identity construction such, as gender, class , and age, due to its function as personal identity and social transformation. Similarly, Mukhtar & Fatima, (2024) found that digital linguistic platforms allow the users to use their language and construct their personal forms and collective identity practices as well since they engaged in their individual self-presentations within global cultures (Mokodompit et al., 2025). Hence, the use of language as a means of communication can establish personal and collective identity constructions.

Meanwhile, stance refers to one's expression for personal viewpoint to gain proposed information (Chindamo & Ahlsen, 2012), by expressing lexical and grammatical attitudes related to the proportional content the message (Biber, D & Finegan. E, 1989), thereby describing and explaining how speakers position themselves in their contents or utterances (Ionescu-Ruxandoiu, et all., 2022). Therefore, stance refers to the way of people to deliver information that focuses on their own stylistic linguistic features.

Moreover, Du Bois, J. W. (2007) states that the power of the stance is to not merely assign value to objects of interest but position social actors as well as calibrate alignment between stance objects, thereby designing a stance tringle that covers evaluation, positioning, and alignment. Evaluation is by analyzing the stance object, for example " that's interesting," (Abrar, 2020) it means that s/he is evaluating the specific target in the interaction. Positioning is by choosing and indexing affective or epistemic stance object; for instance " I am happy" , (Abrar, 2020) it indicates that the speaker is positioning that he is happy, and alignment is by calibrating two stance objects, for example, " I agree", (Abrar, 2020) it means that the speaker aligns himself to prior speakers (Abrar, 2020).

Another framework of stance taking in interactive communication contains epistemic and affective stance. Epistemic stance is the speaker's linguistic expression that refers to the indication of the speaker's commitment to the truth and the degree of the speaker to what he says whereby its meaning indicates the speakers' state of knowledge, opinion (Palmer, F.R. 1986; Lempert, M. P. 2007) and degree of certainty (Lempert, M. P. 2007), thereby expressing the speaker's confidence or speaker's lack of confidence in the truth of the utterance. For example, I don't know" is to claim insufficient knowledge and "I don't know" is to avoid agreement (Beach & Metzger, 1997; Lempert, M. P. 2007). Hence, this stance involves the speaker's attitudes towards knowledge, certainty, and belief.

On the other hand, affective stance refers to person's emotional state in the context of language socialization such as mood, attitude, feeling, and disposition whereby its effect is directed to figure and spoken idea in the interaction (Ochs, E. 1996; Kiesling, S.F. 2022). Moreover, Chindamo & Ahlsen, (2012) point out that indicator of a speaker's emotion is determined from non-linguistic vocalization and the role of vocal component of speech that involves the connected facial and vocal features in the expression of emotion. Similarly, (Ekman, P. 1993; Chindamo & Ahlsen, 2012) asserts that facial expression and emotion are connected that can be inseparable since facial expression indicates emotion better than any other communication feature (Keltner, D., & Ekman, P. 2000; Chindamo & Ahlsen, 2012). For example "At this point it's just better to confess that Kid is my favourite character and I like to draw him," indicates affective stance verb "like" (Biri, 2023). Previous study found that the Indonesian expression of laughter such as "wkwk" on social media is to convey expression of closeness because of its linguistic tool for facilitating interlocutors and their positioning of self within online interpersonal interaction (Widyatmoko & Kushartanti, 2024). Ishak et al., (2025) study showed that the use of stance markers such as "may, obviously, and in my opinion" are more

general than engagement markers such as "you, refer, and I believer" in academic discourse due to their different academic and society cultures. Apparently, these findings have shown that the use of stance marker establishes speakers' sefl-position and emotional state in interpersonal interactive.

Not only do digital linguistic spaces enable Indonesian Gen Z's social media to explore linguistic feature perspective, but they also perceive sociolinguistic perspective. Study by Sadigzade, (2024) found that Gen Z social media posted " slay" ,which was associated with violence but now admiration, that has shown semantic shift, pragmatic enrichment, morphological creativity to construct identity, stance-taking, and efficient meaning -making on social media environment**.** Likewise, Evizariza, (2025) revealed that social media equipped Gen Z users with adaptation to local and global context as a result of the effects of digital language use on sociocultural expectation, speech community adaptability, and identity practice. These findings have shown that incorporating linguistic elements into social media space can facilitate Gen Z users to establish their interpersonal relationship and their identity within sociocultural boundary (Sadigzade, 2024).

Despite numerous studies on digital linguistic creativity that includes orthography, lexical, morphological, and semiotic creativity have been conducted. Several gaps remain in the literature. First, most studies highlight in only one aspect analysis of digital linguistic creativity dimension and lack of integrated analysis across all four DLC categories. Second, only few studies focus on Indonesian Gen Z public figure Instagram users that underrepresents the Indonesian context. Third, most studies focus on linguistic analysis but their absence of sociolinguistic interpretation. Fourth, most studies focus on Instagram users without limiting their focus on Gen Z Instagram users.

To address these gaps, the present study aims to answer the following questions: (1) What is the distribution of DLC categories in Indonesian Gen Z Instagram captions,? (2) How do these categories function as sociolinguistic resources for identity construction and stance-taking.? Therefore, extending existing literature, the present study offers novel contribution by integrating DLC frameworks, that comprise orthography, lexical, morphological, and semiotic dimension, into Indonesian sociolinguistic context that focus on Indonesian Gen Z Instagram users. Subsequently, this study aims to explore four dimensions of linguistic categories covering orthography, lexical, morphological, and semiotic features on Indonesian Gen Z Instagram captions that are examined based on sociolinguistic resources for identity construction Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005) and stance taking that comprises epistemic stance (Holmes, J. 2013; Palmer, F.R. 1986) and affection stance (Ochs, E. 1996 ; Kiesling, S.F. 2022).

The significance of this study lies in its distribution of DLC categories, that consists of orthography, lexical, morphological, and semiotic features, in Indonesian Gen Z Instagram captions by integrating DLC into Indonesian sociolinguistic context that focus on Indonesian Gen Z Instagram users. The significance of this methodological contribution offers replicable qualitative approach by modifying innovative qualitative approach. The practical implication of this study offers both English Language Teaching (ELT) by implementing DLC frameworks into teaching English program and digital communication by incorporating DLC frameworks into other types of digital media such as You Tube, Zoom Meeting, and e-learning platform.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design to describe meaningful characteristic of a distinct group or to develop normative information by collecting information through review of records (Creswell, 2014), thereby exploring the phenomena as the key ideas which relies on text and image data as data collection (Creswell, 2014) in order to develop a detailed understanding of the central phenomenon. This study investigates the distribution of DLC categories, in Indonesian Gen Z Instagram captions by identifying and categorizing each linguistic features of DLC categories that encompass orthography, lexical, morphological, and semiotic on the Instagram captions. Each linguistic features of DLC categories function as sociolinguistic resources for identity construction (Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. 2005) and stance taking that comprises epistemic stance (Holmes, J. 2013; Palmer, F.R. 1986) and affection stance (Ochs, E. 1996; Kiesling, S.F. 2022).

The data for the present study were taken from Indonesian Gen Z Instagram captions posted from 2025 to 2026 who reside surrounding Lampung province whereby web- based data sources were gathered from influData (https://infludata.com/rankings/top-20-influencer-indonesia-bandar-lampung-instagram). The data collection relies on text and image as the key ideas (Creswell, 2014), therefore, the data for the present

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study were collected in the form of writing captions from Instagram users.

The data were collected based on criterion sampling strategy by selecting Instagram users, born between 1997 until 2012, who meet the criteria of birth (Creswell, 2013). According to influData web, the overall number of Indonesian Instagram users comprises 458 users; however, only 124 users who meet the criteria of ages as Gen Z Instagram users due to their ages that range from 14 to 29 years old. Hence, the data for the present study consisted of 124 Instagram captions.

The captions that were gained from Gen Z Instagram posts were examined by identifying their linguistic features of each. Thereafter, the identified linguistic features on the captions were selected and organized into four categories including orthography, lexical, morphological, and semiotic. The categorized Instagram captions were analyzed based on sociolinguistic interpretation that comprised identity construction (Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. 2005) and stance taking that includes epistemic stance (Holmes, J. 2013; Palmer, F.R. 1986) and affection stance (Ochs, E. 1996; Kiesling, S.F. 2022). To interpret sociolinguistic landscape, sociolinguistic resources are analyzed by identifying their linguistic and paralinguistic features to construct identity and by interpreting epistemic and affective stance to construct stance taking.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study presented two perspectives that encompassed digital linguistic creativity (DLC) to examine orthographic, lexical, morphological, and semiotic features and sociolinguistic landscape to interpret identity and stance taking in Indonesian Gen Z Instagram users. The finding of the collected captions in DLC category is reported in the following table.

Table 1. *The captions in Indonesian Gen Z Instagram users*

DLC category	Captions
Orthographic Lexical Morphological Semiotic	Blooming in to 25, sunday: mood .matchy matchy, fUn ^ Memori with , ownerowneran prepare ,Eat, rest, repeat , , FUNN!! ,Wearing kebaya with a beautiful Tapis Lampung, open skies, endless wave, salty air, and happiness beyond ,Oopsiee, Eid dumps ,cis ,sharing is caring ,mau beli kopi yg buy 1 get you, ada ga?? .girl with brain, woman with attitude, lady with class Never go never noo ,"End of an era. Hello next chapter! "Live, love, padel ,tsaaaaaah.. >> kanno ,grayday ,Bandung and hustle bustle, Finally, it's a wrap!! ,voxo, Revisiting the May chapters ,holiday mood: waterfall edition ,something nyuu, white on white ,we didn't just survive. we bloomed ,Hi gurl ,halowww , Fam(ily), oepsie daisy' … stay young on the floor ,a cup of coffee ,and croissant pleasee , - with a "smile," hopefully meaningful , - w / bright sunset, fav sky, Keep blooming in your own pace, SAyang!, talent show memories , 's wearing her first viscose ever finally ,its the beautiful time of the yeaaarr! , theeree shee gooessss ,now you sea me ,feeling in bloom ,otw blubub blubub ,pretty in pinkkishh, Hidden gems… ,stop to take sum' pics ,HI JULY, please be nice!!! , heyo future! , many ups and downs, thanks 2025 , who r u¿ , dump dimp damp , fams <3 , (again) , lv myself , spot paporit , my , Officially gradu(ATE)! , Udah lama ga selfieehhh , Pinkyy , pretty scarves fr , gym date sama adikku sayanggg akuuuu! , what a life…! , recharge my soul , Birthday gift! > some moments deserve to be kept. , In the face of uncertainty, I found my purpose.. ^.^ , finally edited this air fall vlog! , another day another coffee stop , Flash. , lovv , Ngopi estetik , ovrthinker , beach day are the best day! , last bits , confidence is kartini legacy , after so0oo long , 's unusual vibeEe with0ut pashmina , 2025 era unlocked xixixio , point of view , agak speechless bisa make up nari sendirii , camera crumbs , no caption.!? , what elseEee…? , #outfitideas4you , today's dose! , HIIII!! , nyumm , u rock my christmas socks , sunny morninggg at the beach!! , christmas szn + year-end holiyay , 100% vibes, 0% worries , feelin' extra spicy today , hellowww , Less stress, more memories , lives in thiss song , see u next mun , ma-first and favv viscose , Flat face , !NEW PAGE! , pinky , 's archive , pretty #flowers , feeling

myself today , it's turning 22 y.o on 22 march , yash me , graduation t'dy , archiveee hereeee , yalili vibes wkwkwk , me, again , xoxo, , a peaceful life >>> , rEd , 6 from 14467457 pics , taken by one & only , 4ever summer girl , captured w/ my own light , ur pov… , ove my cam & cahaya 15.30Pm , movin' on from my teen-age , SO MUCH FUN!! , Dump arch.

Table 1 shows that the collected captions that were taken from124 Indonesian Gen Z Instagram platforms were identified and categorized into four categories including morphological, lexical, morphological, and semiotic. The finding of the categorized captions is presented in the following table.

Table 2. *Frequency of caption distribution in DLC categories in Indonesian Gen Z Instagram users*

DLC categories	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)
Orthographic	52	52	42
Lexical	37	89	30
Morphological	3	92	2
Semiotic	32	124	26

As seen from Table 2, the findings showed that, out of 124 captions, the proportion of orthographic features indicated 42 percent, followed by lexical features that showed 30 percent. Meanwhile, the findings of the proportion of semiotic features indicated 26 percent, followed by morphological features that showed 2 percent. The result reveals that orthographic features are the most frequent captions that are posted by Gen Z Instagram users as presented in the following table.

Table 3. *The distribution of orthographic captions in DLC category*

No	Captions
1.	sunday: mood ☑
2.	fUn ^
3.	open skies, endless wave, salty air, and happiness beyond
4.	, Finally, it's a wrap!!
5.	bloomin
6.	xoxo
7.	something nyuu
8.	halowww
9.	- w / bright sunset, fav sky
10.	Keep blooming in your own pace, SAyang!
11.	finally, its the beautiful time of the yeaaarr!
12.	theeree shee gooessss
13.	otw blubub blubub
14.	pretty in pinkkishh
15.	HI JULY, please be nice!!!
16.	heyo future!
17.	who r u¿
18.	dump dimp damp
19.	lv myself
20.	spot paporit
21.	Udah lama ga selfieehhh
22.	Pinkyy
23.	gym date sama adikku sayanggg akuuuu!
24.	lovv
25.	ovrthinker
26.	after so0oo long
27.	's unusual vibeEe with0ut pashmina
28.	no caption.!?
29.	what elseEee…?
30.	HIIII!!
31.	nyumm
32.	sunny morninggg at the beach!!
33.	hellowww
34.	lives in thiss song
35.	see u next mun
36.	ma-first and favv viscose
37.	!NEW PAGE!
38.	's archive
39.	it's turning 22 y.o on 22 march
40.	yash me
41.	graduation t'dy
42.	archiveee hereeee
43.	a peaceful life >>>
44.	rEd
45.	taken by one & only
46.	4ever summer girl
47.	captured w/ my own light
48.	ur pov…
49.	love my cam & cahaya 15.30Pm
50.	movin' on from my teen-age
51.	SO MUCH FUN!!
52.	Dump arch

Table 3 shows that 52 captions that were gained from Gen Z Instagram platforms were categorized into orthographic creativity. Several examples of semiotic captions are **"**FUNN!!" instead of "Fun", " graduation t'dy" instead of "graduation today" and "who r u" instead of "who are you". The modification of this linguistic feature occurred

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since Gen Z Instagram users created various linguistic features (Hasjim et al., 2026). This finding is affirmed with (Hasjim et al., 2026) and (Lisdayani, 2025) has shown orthographic creativities are constructed as a result of their stylistic linguistic interferences. Similarly, (Liashenko & Liashenko, 2024) has shown that orthographic creativity in Instagram users constructed the variety and diversity of live speech as a violation of a person's speech to attract attention. Thus, the various linguistic features and emotional function allow Gen Z to construct their orthographic creativities to attract attention in their online interaction.

The second most frequent captions that are posted by Gen Z Instagram users are lexical features as presented in the following Table.

Table 4. *The distribution of lexical captions in DLC category*

No	Captions
1.	matchy matchy
2.	Wearing kebaya with a beautiful Tapis Lampung
3.	Eid dumps
4.	cis ,
5.	sharing is caring
6.	mau beli kopi yg buy 1 get you, ada ga??
7.	girl with brain, woman with attitude, lady with class
8.	"End of an era. Hello next chapter!
9.	"Live, love, padel" tsaaaaaah
10.	Revisiting the May chapters ♡
11.	Hi gurl
12.	Fam(ily)
13.	oepsie daisy’
14.	… stay young on the floor
15.	now you sea me
16.	Hidden gems…
17.	stop to take sum’ pics
18.	many ups and downs, thanks 2025
19.	fams <3
20.	pretty scarves fr ,(
21.	recharge my soul
22.	finally edited this air fall vlog!
23.	another day another coffee stop
24.	Ngopi estetik
25.	2025 era unlocked xixixio
26.	camera crumbs
27.	#outfitideas4you
28.	today’s dose! ,
29.	u rock my christmas socks
30.	100% vibes, 0% worries
31.	feelin’ extra spicy today ,(
32.	pinky
33.	pretty #flowers
34.	yalili vibes wkwkwk
35.	xoxo,
36.	6 from 14467457
37.	Dump arch

Table 4 demonstrated that 37 captions that were posted by Gen Z Instagram users on their platforms were categorized into lexical creativity. Several examples of lexical captions are “camera crumbs” that means to randomly show personal photos on Instagram platforms at distinct moments. Lexical caption “ feelin’ extra spicy today” intends to show person’s appearance with the all -red look. Other example “ 2025 era unlocked xixixio” means to welcome the new year and “xixixio” refers to laugh in relaxed situation. The finding of lexical features has revealed that Gen Z constructed lexical captions to gain particular meanings in online communicative interaction. This is consistent with the previous study by Adiningsih et al.(2026) have shown Gen Z occurred language change in linguistic feature and in its meaning on their social media communication as well. Likewise, Hnatyuk et al. (2026) showed that lexical innovation refers to the way of person’s expression and cognitive needs that provide supportive environment for creating a new concept and vocabulary in informal communication because of the flexibility, adaptability, and multifunctionality of social networks. Hence, the creativity of lexical features allows Gen Z to build not only linguistic innovation but also particular meanings to form neologism that convey person’s expression in social media interaction as a result of language shift. The third most frequent captions that are posted by Gen Z Instagram users are semiotic features as illustrated in the following Table.

Table 5. *The distribution of semiotic captions in DLC category*

No	Captions
1.	Blooming in to 25
2.	sunday: mood
3.	Memori with
4.	Eat, rest, repeat
5.	
6.	Never go never noo
7.	>> kanno
8.	grayday
9.	Bandung and hustle bustle

10.	holiday mood: waterfall edition
11.	white on white ♡
12.	we didn't just survive. we bloomed
13.	a cup of coffee, and croissant pleasee
14.	- with a "smile," hopefully meaningful
15.	talent show memories
16.	's wearing her first viscose ever ↔
17.	feeling in bloom
18.	(again)
19.	my♡
20.	what a life…!♡
21.	Birthday gift! > some moments deserve to be kept.
22.	In the face of uncertainty, I found my purpose.. ^.^
23.	Flash.
24.	beach day are the best day!
25.	last bits
26.	confidence is kartini legacy
27.	point of view
28.	agak speechless bisa make up nari sendirii□
29.	Less stress, more memories
30.	Flat face
31.	feeling myself today□
32.	me, again

As shown in Table 5, 32 captions, which adopted emojis, that were obtained from Gen Z Instagram platforms were the category of semiotic creativity. Several examples of semiotic captions are "my♡" to show love; "beach day are the best day! ♀" to convey a relaxing day on the beach with warm sunlight; and "feeling in bloom" to show much happiness. The finding has shown that Gen Z adopted semiotic features in their Instagram platforms to intensify their particular emotional expressions. This finding was in support to Opoku-Fofie & Quarcoo (2026) and Raudani Rahman et al. (2023) and Telaumbanua et al. (2024) has found that emoji refers complex semiotic symbols to convey emotional expression that undergo meaning shift. Opoku-Fofie & Quarcoo (2026) reveals that emoji enabled to convey emotional and non-verbal expression to comprehend a message because of its multiple function in online interaction (Raudani Rahman et al., 2023). Similarly, Telaumbanua et al.'s (2024) study has shown that emojis provide social media users with essential function in digital communication due to their accommodation to create emotional nuance and send message clarity. Hence, linguistic creativity of semiotic features allows Gen Z to adopt various emojis to maintain emotional relationship and elucidate meaning message due to their functions not only as visual paralanguage but also as non-verbal cue in digital linguistic interaction.

The least frequent captions that are posted by Gen Z Instagram users are morphological features as illustrated in the following Table.

Table 6. *The distribution of morphological captions in DLC category*

No	Captions
1.	ownerowneran prepare
2.	Officially gradu(ATE)!
3.	christmas szn + year-end holiyay

Table 6 shows that only 3 captions that were posted on Gen Z Instagram platforms were the category of morphological creativities. The examples of morphological captions are "ownerowneran prepare" which means to modify repeated words" ownerowner" into adding suffix -an; "Officially gradu(ATE)!" to modify word structure "graduate" into **"**gradu(ATE)" to emphasize the graduation moment; and " christmas szn + year-end holiyay" to represent clipping and blending whereby the word modification "season" into "szn" refers to omitting vowel and shortened words, and the word modification "holyday" into "holiyay" refers to embedding phonetic sound to express felicity. The finding has shown that Gen Z posted their caption in morphological features due to their stylistic caption creativities. This finding is affirmed with Arifah et al. (2026) and Rahayu & Anis, (2026) whereby their findings reveled that the GenZ's morphological constructions are formed as a result of their linguistic innovations in morphological process. This finding is also consistent with Verlin's (2025) study that has found that morphological constructions on Instagram platforms are presented in the shortening forms such as omission and acronym due to the principle of linguistic efficiency and speed communication. Hence, Gen Z enable to create a novel linguistic feature by modifying word formation into blended, coined, and omitted words not only to alter word forms but also meaning intention due to their morphological innovation in digital linguistic interaction.

With regard to sociolinguistic landscape, the finding of this study presents identity construction

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and stance taking from Indonesian Gen Z Instagram captions as sociolinguistic resources The findings of identity constructions are obtained by identifying each linguistic and paralinguistic feature taken from the collected DLC captions on Indonesian Gen Z Instagram platforms as presented in the following Table.

Table 7. *The distribution of types of identity features for identity construction*

DLC Categories (Sociolinguistic Resources)	Types of Identity Features		Distribution of Frequency		
	Linguistic Features	Paralinguistic Features	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)
Orthographic	53 captions		53	53	43
Lexical	37 captions		37	90	30
Morphological	3 captions		3	93	2
Semiotic		31 captions	31	124	25

Table 7 showed that, out of the four DLC categories for identity construction, three categories that comprised orthographic, lexical, and morphological features were identified by using linguistic features. Meanwhile, only one category was identified by using paralinguistic features. The finding demonstrated that, out of the two types of markers, the proportion of linguistic markers showed 99 captions that indicated 75 percent in that each category demonstrated orthographic showed 53 captions (43%), lexical showed 37 captions (30%), and morphological showed 2 captions (2%). On the other hand, the finding of identity construction that was identified by using paralinguistic markers refers to semiotic category that showed 31 captions that indicated 25 percent. Several examples of linguistic features are "FUNN!!" in orthographic feature to show the Instagram user's enthusiasm in his social media communication, "Officially gradu(ATE)!" in morphological to emphasize Instagram user's happiness at graduation moment that was posted in his online interaction. The example of paralinguistic feature is "point of view 👀" in semiotic feature to convey Instagram user's particular attention for particular topic in his social media interaction.

The finding has shown the captions on Instagram platforms generate to build not only personal identity but also group identity in Instagram users' community within digital Interaction because they showed their characteristics of personal traits in their Instagram community. This finding is in line with Rosalina et al. (2021) that has shown that identity construction on Instagram is emerged not only as a personal creation but also as negotiated outcome of individual agency whereby its construction is influenced by digital cultural space. This finding is also affirmed by Sultan et al.'s (2026) study has revealed that emoji caption on Instagram platform enables to construct identity performance because of the emergence of emoji meaning as not only decorative element but also signaling identity in the digital interaction. Thus, Instagram captions allow the users to shape their personal and group identities by exploiting multimodal communicative spaces because of their existence of personal traits into their Instagram cycles in digital interaction.

The finding of stance taking that encompassed epistemic and affective stances in that each stance utilized markers to interpret the stance taking that were gathered from the collected DLC captions on Indonesian Gen Z Instagram platforms. The result of the identified stance construction is reported in the following Table.

Table 8. *The distribution of stance taking markers in DLC category*

Stance Construction	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)
Epistemic Stance Markers	96	96	78
Affective Stance Markers	28	124	22

Table 8 demonstrated that, the collected captions in the DLC categories were interpreted by using epistemic stance and affective stance markers to interpret stance construction. The finding of epistemic stance markers in DLC Instagram captions showed 96 captions that indicated 78 percent. Several examples of epistemic features "another day another coffee stop", "after so0oo long", and "sunny morninggg at the beach!!"in that each caption displays Instagram users' degree of knowledge or certainty to construct a stance in digital interpersonal interaction. The findings are confirmed by Purnama (2026) that has shown virtual identity and

epistemic are shaped by global power whereby the virtual identity is established based on the dimensions of construction, performance, regulation and stratification. Similarly, Kyza & Varda (2023) has revealed that epistemic action in social media post allows the users to activate their curiosity and interest to seek additional information as their knowledge driven- actions since personal characteristics and epistemic belief appeal to epistemic actions. Hence, the Instagram captions that are interpreted by using epistemic stance features provide th users to construct a stance that require inter subjectivity reality and the degree of knowledge.

The finding of affective stance feature in DLC Instagram captions showed 28 captions that indicated 22 percent. Several examples of epistemic stance features. are "FUNN!!", "holiday mood: waterfall edition 😩🤛", and "talent show memories 🤦‍♀️" whereby each caption expresses emotional response in the digital social interaction to build closes relationship. This finding is consistent with Palit (2026) has demonstrated that affective stance refers to appraisal resources to convey satisfaction or dissatisfaction expression on online consumer discourse that functions not only as information -sharing but also as a form of mediated interpersonal communication. Likewise Li et al.'s (2024) study revealed that affective responses and attitude on social media spaces refer to serial moderator between the display of virtual human for emotional state and the intention of social media users' behaviour. Hence, the interpreted Instagram captions by affective stance markers allow the users to build affective features from personal expression into social occurrence in the digital interaction due to the construction of multimodal and emotional expression that involve linguistic and paralinguistic markers.

CONCLUSION

The present study investigates the distribution of the four DLC categories on Indonesian Gen Z Instagram captions in that each of the linguistic features were identified and categorized into four categories, namely orthography, lexical, morphological, and semiotic features. Each of the linguistic features of DLC category function as sociolinguistic resources for identity construction that is interpreted by using linguistic and paralinguistic markers (Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. 2005) and stance taking that comprises epistemic stance (Holmes, J. 2013; Palmer, F.R. 1986) and affection stance (Ochs, E. 1996; Kiesling, S.F. 2022) that each stance is interpret by using epistemic and affective stance markers.

The results of this study present two perspectives that encompass DLC categories and sociolinguistic landscape. The finding of DLC category, out of the four DLC categories, orthographic features are the most frequent captions due to their construction in various linguistic feature as affirmed by Lisdayani, (2025) and Liashenko & Liashenko(2024). Therefore, orthographic creativity dominates DLC Instagram captions that are posted by Indonesian Gen Z Instagram users due to their various linguistic patterns to attract particular attention. The second most frequent captions posts are lexical features to get specific meaning in online communicative interaction as confirmed by Adiningsih et al. (2026) and (Hnatyuk et al. (2026). Thus, Instagram users post lexical creativity captions to create their linguistic innovation to form neologism because of language shift process in digital interaction.

The third most frequent caption posts are semiotic features to emphasize their special emotional expressions as supported by Opoku-Fofie & Quarcoo (2026) and Raudai Rahman et al. (2023). Therefore, Instagram users adopt emojis as their semiotic creativities to maintain emotional relationship due to the function of visual paralanguage to clarify meaning message. The least frequent captions posts are morphological features to show their stylistic creativities as affirmed by Arifah et al. (2026a) and (Rhayu & Anis (2026). This creativity becomes the least frequent captions posts since Instagram users need the ability to word formation analysis to create a new linguistic feature.

The result of this study related to sociolinguistic landscape encompasses two interpretations that comprises identity construction and stance taking. Identity constructions are interpreted based on linguistic and paralinguistic features. The finding of identity construction based on linguistic features refers to orthographic, lexical, and morphological captions. Meanwhile, the finding of identity construction based on paralinguistic features refers to semiotic captions. The result of this finding shows that Instagram captions posts enable to build personal and group identity in Instagram community as affirmed by Rosalina et al.(2021) and Sultan et al. (2026). Hence, Instagram user's identity constructions can shape personal and group identity due to their existence of personal traits in online multimodal communication interaction.

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Furthermore, stance taking is interpreted from epistemic and affective stance features. The finding of epistemic stance has demonstrated that Instagram users construct this stance in their interpersonal interaction by using their knowledge or certainty as confirmed by Purnama (2026) and Kyza & Varda (2023). Epistemic stances from Instagram captions posts are created from knowledge-driven actions in digital linguistic communities. Therefore, this stance requires inter subjectivity reality and the degree of knowledge in digital interaction. Meanwhile, the finding of affective stance has demonstrated that Instagram users' captions posts convey their emotional responses to establish close relationship as confirmed by Palit, 2026; Li et al. (2024). Hence, this stance needs multimodal and emotional expression to create stance taking in digital interaction.

In a nutshell, digital Linguistic Creativity (DLC) refers to Instagram platforms where the users are born between 1997 until 2012. In their Instagram communities, they post their captions by creating their own linguistic creativities in digital interaction. This study has revealed that Indonesian Gen Z captions have distributed to four DLC categories that refers to orthographic that shows the highest frequent captions posts, meanwhile, morphological that shows the least frequent captions posts. The rest of the two categories refers to lexical that shows the second most frequent captions posts, meanwhile, semiotic shows the third most frequent captions posts. In conjunction with sociolinguistic landscape, the four DLC categories captions posts are gathered that function as sociolinguistic resources for identity construction and stance taking. In this study, identity constructions are interpreted from linguistic and paralinguistic features to examine sociolinguistic resources. The findings have revealed that the existence of Instagram users in their online communities is not only as personal identity but also group identity. Whereas, stance taking contains epistemic and affective stances to examine sociolinguistic resources that have revealed that Instagram captions posts are created by exploring their knowledge driven-action, inter subjectivity, and emotional expression.

However, this study is limited by solely analyzing one Indonesian Generation Z Instagram users and focuses on stance construction and stance taking concepts in sociolinguistic landscape. This provides for future research with chance to investigate other Indonesian Generations such as Gen Y or Gen Alpha to extend the understanding of various generation groups of Indonesian Instagram users that across diverse age groups within Indonesian context. In addition, this creates opportunity for future research to investigate other concepts of sociolinguistic landscape such as linguistic variations or gender diversity to widen the understanding of the language patterns dynamics in sociolinguistic landscape. By addressing these limitations, future research can further contribute to the role of digital linguistic platforms in cultural and social contexts in interpersonal interaction.

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