

Analysis of English Language Use and National Identity Awareness among Students of the English Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University

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Abstract

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This study investigates the patterns of English language utilization and its subsequent implications on national identity awareness among students within the English Education Study Program at Universitas Nusa Cendana. Employing a descriptive quantitative methodology, data were gathered from 11 participants via a structured questionnaire evaluating three core indicators: sociolinguistic dynamics in daily interactions, internal perceptions toward the urgency of English, and the standing of the Indonesian language within academic and national spheres. The empirical evidence reveals a multilingual tendency where students frequently blend Indonesian, English, and Kupang Malay in their informal communication. Interestingly, despite the high intensity of foreign vocabulary usage in digital spaces, their appreciation for Indonesian as a unifying national instrument remains uncompromised. The majority of respondents perceive English strictly as an academic competence rather than a marker of social prestige, maintaining a high level of confidence when utilizing standard Indonesian. Ultimately, this exploration demonstrates that international language proficiency and the preservation of national language quality can coexist simultaneously. This study underscores the critical role of civic education in fostering global competence among the youth while keeping them firmly rooted in their national identity.

Keywords: English language, national identity, university students, globalization, Civic and Pancasila Education.

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INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era of globalization, significant transformations have occurred across various aspects of life, including education, communication, technology, and culture. One of the most evident impacts is the increasingly widespread use of English as an international language employed in global communication, scientific publications, information technology, and international interactions. Within higher education environments, proficiency in English has become an essential competence because it provides broader access to knowledge resources, international academic literature, and employment opportunities at the global level. Furthermore, the internationalization of higher education in Indonesia has contributed to the increasing use of English in various academic activities among university students. Amid the growing use of English, concerns

have emerged regarding its potential impact on national identity. Indonesian, as the national and unifying language, plays a strategic role in establishing and preserving the identity of the Indonesian nation. National identity functions not only as a symbol of statehood but also reflects the cultural values, language, and national character that distinguish Indonesia from other nations. Therefore, the increasingly extensive use of foreign languages must be balanced with an awareness of national unity through efforts to preserve and appreciate the Indonesian language as an integral component of national identity. The phenomenon of English usage is becoming increasingly evident among university students, particularly those enrolled in the English Language Education Study Program. In both academic activities and everyday social interactions, students frequently use English or engage in code-mixing between English and Indonesian.

This phenomenon represents a consequence of globalization and advances in digital technology that accelerate cross-cultural interactions. Research conducted by Harahap et al. (2024) demonstrates that globalization has encouraged the increasing use of mixed Indonesian and English in various forms of digital communication media, thereby creating challenges in maintaining the national linguistic identity. Several previous studies have examined the relationship between globalization, foreign language use, and national identity. Saragih and Firmansyah (2023) found that globalization is perceived as both an opportunity and a challenge for students in maintaining their national identity. Meanwhile, Syafrony (2024) explained that the use of English in Indonesia does not necessarily diminish Indonesian identity; rather, it creates a process of linguistic identity negotiation that enables individuals to maintain their national identity amid global influences.

Research by Kholid, Rahman, and Sinaga (2024) further emphasized that English language learning should be integrated with national identity values so that global competencies and national character can develop simultaneously. Nevertheless, most previous studies have focused on the influence of globalization on national identity in general or on broader and less specific contexts of language education. Studies specifically examining English language use and national identity awareness among students of English Language Education Study Programs remain very limited, particularly within the context of students at Nusa Cendana University. In addition, studies that connect this phenomenon with the perspective of Pancasila and Citizenship Education remain relatively scarce. This condition indicates the existence of a research gap that requires further investigation. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on students of the English Language Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University, who demonstrate relatively high intensity and frequency of English language use in both academic activities and everyday social life, while being analyzed from the perspective of national identity awareness and Pancasila and Citizenship Education. This study is expected to provide insights into how students perceive the use of English as a global necessity without diminishing or undermining their respect for the Indonesian language as a component of national identity. Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze the use of English and examine the national identity awareness of students in the English

Language Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University from the perspective of Pancasila and Citizenship Education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Globalization has brought significant impacts to various aspects of life, including education and communication. One of the most visible consequences is the widespread use of English as an international language employed for accessing knowledge, technology, and facilitating communication across countries and cultures. According to Sandra Lee McKay (2002), English functions as an international language that enables people from diverse cultural backgrounds to interact on a global scale. Meanwhile, Christiane Lütge and Thorsten Merse (2022) emphasize that English language learning is not solely intended to develop communicative competence but also to foster digital literacy and global citizenship.

On the other hand, the growing use of English is frequently associated with issues of national identity. National identity refers to the characteristics that distinguish one nation from another and serve as the foundation of social unity. Andrea and Nurgiansah explain that Indonesian national identity is constituted through elements such as the Indonesian language, Pancasila, and education. In this context, the Indonesian language occupies a crucial position because it functions both as a symbol of national unity and as a medium of national communication. The relationship between the use of English and national identity is not necessarily contradictory. Proficiency in English may be viewed as a necessity for addressing global challenges, whereas national identity serves as a foundation for preserving national values. Therefore, the ability to use English does not inherently obscure or weaken nationalism, provided that individuals maintain an awareness of the importance of the Indonesian language and national values.

Nationalism constitutes the concept that connects these two dimensions. According to Ilmi, Salam, and Simaremare (2023), nationalism is an attitude of patriotism that can be manifested through a sense of belonging to the nation and efforts to preserve national unity. Furthermore, Rochim and Agustama (2025) assert that nationalism serves as a protective safeguard that enables younger generations to preserve and maintain their national identity amid the influence of global culture. Within this context, Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn) plays a strategic role in strengthening national identity and fostering national values. Through PPKn, university students are not only equipped with an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens but are also provided with a comprehensive foundation for developing nationalism, patriotism, and national consciousness. Therefore, the use of English as an academic and global necessity can coexist harmoniously with the strengthening of national identity when supported by strong and effective citizenship education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive quantitative approach to obtain an overview of English language use and its influence on students' perspectives toward the Indonesian language and national identity. This descriptive approach

was selected because the objective of the study was to provide a depiction of the phenomenon based on data obtained from respondents without manipulating the research variables. The study was conducted in June 2026 at the English Language Education Study Program of Nusa Cendana University (UNDANA), located in Kupang City, East Nusa Tenggara. The research site was selected based on the assumption that students of the English Language Education Study Program demonstrate a relatively high and extensive intensity of English language use, both in academic activities and daily social interactions, thereby establishing a relevant connection with the objectives of the study.

The research subjects consisted of 11 students from the English Language Education Study Program who were selected as respondents and served as the primary source of research data. Respondents were selected purposively by considering the extent of their involvement in using English within the university environment. Data were collected through the distribution of a questionnaire that was systematically designed and administered to all respondents. The research instrument consisted of seven question items grouped into three main indicators, namely language use in social interactions, perceptions of English language use, and views regarding the position of the Indonesian language in academic and national life.

The first indicator examined students' language-use habits in daily life, including the language most frequently used when interacting with friends outside classroom hours and the reasons for using English terms in social media and digital communication. The second indicator measured students' perceptions of the influence of English language use, including views regarding the social prestige associated with English speakers and the level of self-confidence individuals experience when using standard Indonesian in academic settings. The third indicator investigated students' views regarding the position of the Indonesian language through questions related to the language considered most relevant for conveying scientific ideas, impressions of using proper and correct Indonesian, and perceptions concerning the influence of mandatory English proficiency on the quality of Indonesian language use.

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques and presented in the form of percentages. The analysis was conducted by calculating the frequency of respondents' answers to each question item and subsequently presenting the findings in tables and descriptive explanations. The results of the analysis were then interpreted by relating them to the concepts of globalization, national identity, and Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn) in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the influence of English language use on students' national consciousness.

To ensure data validity, all respondents were provided with an explanation regarding the rationale and objectives of the study prior to completing the questionnaire and were requested to provide responses in accordance with their actual conditions and experiences. Thus, the data obtained were expected to reflect the actual condition of English language use and students' perspectives regarding the Indonesian language within the scope of the English Language Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Language Use in Students' Social Interactions

Table 1. The Language Most Frequently Used When Interacting with Friends Outside Class Hours

Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Indonesian	1	9.1
English	0	0.0
Mixed Indonesian and English	5	45.5
Kupang Malay	5	45.5
Total	11	100

Source: Research data (2026)

The findings indicate that the majority of students in the English Language Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University use a combination of Indonesian and English (45.5%) as well as Kupang Malay (45.5%) in their daily interactions. These findings demonstrate that students operating within a multilingual environment may be influenced by both local and global factors. Kupang Malay continues to be used as a marker of regional identity and as a means of communication that remains close and relevant to students' social lives, while the use of English elements reflects the influence of globalization and the academic demands they encounter. These findings are consistent with the study conducted by Harahap et al. (2024), which states that the development of globalization and digital technology has contributed to the increasing use of mixed Indonesian and English in the communication practices of younger generations. The use of code-mixing does not necessarily result in a shift in national identity; rather, it may represent a process of linguistic adaptation to the demands of modern communication. From the perspective of national identity, the use of English by students does not eliminate or obscure the position of local languages or the Indonesian language. This finding indicates that students are capable of maintaining and preserving their diverse linguistic identities while simultaneously adapting to the demands of globalization. Therefore, the use of English may be viewed as a communicative and academic necessity rather than a replacement for national identity.

The use of English terms in social media and digital communication is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Reasons for Using English Terms in Social Media and Digital Communication

Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Habit within social circles	1	9.1
Habit within the family or social media	1	9.1
To appear more modern	0	0.0
Spontaneously without any specific reason	9	81.8
Total	11	100

Source: Research data (2026)

Furthermore, 81.8% of respondents admitted that they use English terms spontaneously in social media and digital communication. This finding suggests that English has become part of the communication habits of younger generations who have grown up amid the rapid expansion of technology and global information flows. This condition is in line with the view of Muslim, Suherdi, and Imperiani (2022), who argue that the internationalization of education and technological development have expanded the use of English in students' everyday social lives.

2. Students' Perceptions of English Language Use

Table 3. Perceptions of Students Who Actively Use English

Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	0	0.0
Agree	2	18.1
Somewhat Disagree	5	45.5
Disagree	4	36.4
Total	11	100

Source: Research data (2026)

The findings reveal that the majority of respondents disagreed with the view that students who actively use English are perceived as more intelligent or possess higher social prestige. A total of 45.5% of respondents somewhat disagreed, while 36.4% disagreed with this perception. These findings indicate that students view English primarily as a tool for communication and an academic necessity rather than as a symbol of social status. This result is consistent with the study conducted by Syafrony (2024), which explains that the use of English in Indonesia is not necessarily associated with cultural superiority or a particular identity. Instead, English is more commonly perceived as a medium for participating in global communication without diminishing national identity.

The level of students' self-confidence when using standard Indonesian is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Level of Self-Confidence in Using Standard Indonesian

Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes, often feel inferior	1	9.1
Sometimes	4	36.4
Never	6	54.5
Total	11	100

Source: Research data (2026)

The findings further indicate that 54.5% of respondents never feel inferior when using standard Indonesian on campus. This finding suggests that Indonesian continues to hold a strong position as both the national language and the language of academic communication. Although students possess good English proficiency, they remain confident in using Indonesian in various formal situations. According to Nurdin (2023), language constitutes one of the primary elements of national identity. Therefore, the high level of confidence demonstrated by students in using Indonesian indicates that their national

identity has not been compromised by foreign languages and remains well preserved despite studying in an academic environment that requires foreign language proficiency.

3. Students' Views of the Indonesian Language in Academic and National Contexts

Table 5. The Language Considered Most Ideal for Conveying Scientific Ideas

Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Standard Indonesian	4	36.4
English	3	27.3
Mixed Indonesian and English	4	36.4
Total	11	100

Source: Research data (2026)

The findings indicate that 36.4% of respondents selected standard Indonesian as the most ideal and relevant language for conveying scientific ideas, while another 36.4% preferred a combination of Indonesian and English. These findings suggest that students continue to demonstrate a strong sense of integrity, as reflected in their perception that Indonesian is capable of effectively fulfilling academic and scholarly functions. On the other hand, some students also consider English highly important due to the large number of scientific references and international publications available in English. This condition reflects a balance between global demands and national awareness in language use.

These findings support the study conducted by Kholid, Rahman, and Sinaga (2024), which states that English proficiency and the strengthening of national identity are not mutually contradictory. Both can coexist when individuals understand the respective functions of each language in a balanced and proportional manner.

The students' impressions of the use of proper and correct Indonesian are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Impressions of the Use of Proper and Correct Indonesian

Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Admire and consider the speaker educated	6	54.5
Consider it strange or overly formal	1	9.1
Neutral	4	36.4
Total	11	100

Source: Research data (2026)

In addition, 54.5% of respondents expressed admiration for individuals who are able to use proper and correct Indonesian. This finding indicates that Indonesian continues to possess considerable value and prestige among university students. The absence of dominant negative perceptions regarding the use of Indonesian demonstrates that students continue to appreciate the national language as an integral part of national identity.

Furthermore, perceptions regarding the influence of the requirement to master English on the quality of Indonesian language use are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. The Influence of the Requirement to Master English on the Quality of Indonesian Language Use

Response Option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	1	9.1
Agree	2	18.2
Somewhat Disagree	2	18.2
Disagree	6	54.5
Total	11	100

Source: Research data (2026)

The findings also indicate that the majority of respondents disagreed with the notion that the requirement to master English leads to the deterioration of Indonesian language quality. These findings clearly demonstrate that students remain capable of distinguishing the function of English as a medium of global communication from the role of Indonesian as a national identity marker. Therefore, proficiency in a foreign language does not directly reduce or diminish one's appreciation for the national language.

4. Implications for Pancasila and Citizenship Education

The findings of this study have important implications for Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn). The results indicate that the high level of English language use among students does not weaken their awareness of national identity. Students continue to value Indonesian as the language of national unity and as a symbol of national identity. These findings support the view of Nurgiansah and Rachman (2022), who argue that Pancasila and Citizenship Education plays a highly important and strategic role in developing citizens who possess national awareness, nationalism, and strong character amid the growing challenges of globalization. Through citizenship education, students are expected to understand that proficiency in English constitutes part of their preparedness to engage with the global world, while the use of Indonesian represents a form of respect for national identity.

Therefore, this study demonstrates that students of the English Language Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University are capable of positioning English and Indonesian according to their respective functions. English may be utilized as a medium for developing global competencies, whereas Indonesian continues to be regarded as a national identity that must be preserved, maintained, and used properly and correctly in social, national, and civic life.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the use of English among students of the English Language Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University is relatively high, particularly in social media use and digital communication. Nevertheless, students continue to frequently use Kupang Malay and Indonesian in their daily lives. The findings also indicate that the use of English does not automatically diminish students' sense of pride in the Indonesian language. The majority of respondents continue to appreciate the use of proper and correct Indonesian and do not perceive English as a symbol of

prestige or higher social status. Overall, this study demonstrates that English language proficiency and national identity awareness can coexist harmoniously. Students are able to utilize English as an academic necessity and as a means of responding to the challenges of globalization without neglecting Indonesian as the nation's identity and unifying language.

Recommendations: 1) For Students, Students are expected to continue developing their English language proficiency to support their academic needs and future career opportunities. However, this competence should be balanced with an awareness of the importance of using and preserving the Indonesian language as an integral part of national identity. 2) For Educational Institutions, Study programs and universities should continue to instill national values through both academic and non-academic activities. In addition, institutions may encourage the use of proper and correct Indonesian without limiting students' opportunities to enhance their English language proficiency. 3) For Future Researchers, Future studies are recommended to involve a larger number of respondents drawn from various study programs or higher education institutions. By doing so, the findings may provide a broader understanding of the influence of English language use on students' national identity awareness.

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