

Slang Words Used by Teenagers in Their Daily Life While Texting with Their Friends

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ABSTRACT

This was a descriptive qualitative study of slang words used by teenagers in their daily life while texting with their friends. In order to find the most used slang words and the most used type of word formation in that slang words the writer's used one main theory which is theory of word formation processes by Yule (2010) supported by the definition of slang words by Connie Eble (2012). The findings revealed that the kind of slang words that are being used are Indonesian slang words, with a total of 23 slang words found in the text messages. In this study the writer also found that the most used word formation processes for the slang words that are used by teenagers when they text each other are clipping with a total number of 24 words.

Keywords: Adolescents, Digital Communication, Language Evolution, Slang, Sociolinguistics, Text Messaging, Word Formation

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a key role in communication, self-expression, and building social connections. For teenagers, it also serves as a marker of identity and belonging. One of the most dynamic aspects of teenage communication is the use of slang, especially in informal digital contexts like texting. Slang is informal, often playful, and constantly evolving. According to Kridalaksana (1982), slang is a unique variety of language used by certain social groups to communicate internally, often unintelligible to outsiders. Holmes (2013) emphasizes that slang reflects age, signaling membership in youth culture, while Fromkin (1993) describes slang as creative and efficient, making expressions easier to use.

Examples of Indonesian slang include terms like "*anjir*" or "*anying*" (milder euphemisms for "anjing," meaning "dog," often used to express surprise), "*gokil*" (meaning "crazy cool"), and "*menyala*" (praise for someone's achievements). English slang, such as *omw* (on my way), *bro* (brother or friend), and *gurl* (a casual term for girl), is also widely used by teenagers in texts. These words often arise from processes like abbreviation, blending, or modification, making texting quicker and more engaging.

The writer's interest in this topic stems from observing the rich variety of slang used by teenagers in everyday texting. Texting, characterized by brevity and informality, encourages creativity with language. David Crystal (2008) highlights how texting often incorporates slang, abbreviations, and playful spellings to suit this fast-paced medium. Teenagers prefer using slang as it fosters connection and mutual understanding within their peer groups.

Slang creation can involve processes such as acronyms, borrowing, blending, coinage, compounding, derivation, multiple processes (Yule, 2010). Nyoman Riasa (2002) notes that some Indonesian slang originates from formal language but undergoes transformations like

nasalization, contraction, and word replacement. For instance, Jakarta teens commonly use *bokap* (dad) and *nyokap* (mom) due to familiarity and comfort.

This study addresses the limited research on teenagers' digital communication habits. By exploring the slang used in texting, it aims to uncover how adolescents build friendships, express emotions, and reflect cultural trends. It also examines how digital platforms influence language evolution, offering insights into the informal linguistic practices of youth. The writer analyzes data collected from the results of daily conversations between the writer's and the writer's closest friends. The data collected is data taken from conversations via WhatsApp, Instagram DM and TikTok DM from August to November. The writer's main focus is to extract and analyze the slang words that are used in the conversation based on the data that is already collected.

METHOD

The data are obtained from the screenshot of the writer's and her closest friend's daily conversation which in total included 6 peoples. The steps that the writer did while collecting data are as follows, first the writer skims through her conversation with her friend on whatsapp. Secondly the writer screenshot and put the data on a table and began on categorizing which data that indicate the usage of slang words. Finally, after categorizing the data the writer then wrote down the type of word formation of the slang, the original word, and the meaning of the word in the form of a table.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the writer presents the findings and discussion to answer the statement problem chapter one. This discussion is divided into two parts: (1) What kind of slang words are used by young people when they communicate with their friends via messages? (2) Which type of word formation is most used by teenagers when they are texting with their friend while using the slang words?

No .	Slang Word	Type of WFP	Original Word	Meaning
1.	Anjir	Alteration	Anjing	An expression to express annoyance or surprise
2.	Anying	Alteration	Anjing	An expression to express annoyance or surprise
3.	Anjay	Alteration	Anjing	An expression to express annoyance or surprise
4.	Bjir	Alteration	Anjir	An expression to express annoyance or surprise
5.	Bro	Clipping	Brother	A familiar greet to call each other (can be female/male)
6.	Ntar	Clipping	Bentar	Later/wait
7.	Gue/gw/gua	phonetics variations + clipping	Aku	Me
8.	Elu/lu	phonetics variations + clipping	Kamu	You

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9.	Otw/omw	Acronym	On my way/on the way	On the way
10.	Wkwkwk/aowkwkw	-	LOL/LMAO	An expression for laughing
11.	Gurl	Alteration	Girl	Female
12.	Bruh	Clipping + alteration	Brother	Used to express annoyance or surprise
13.	Imma	Clipping	I am going to	I will do...
14.	Cuz	Clipping	Because	Because
15.	Sy	Clipping	Saya	Me
16.	U	alteration + clipping	You	You
17.	Naur	alteration + phonetic imitation	No	No
18.	Rmh	Clipping	Rumah	House
19.	Cmn	Clipping	Cuman (formal cuma)	Just/only
20.	Ak	Clipping	Aku	Me
21.	Ok	Clipping	Okay	An expression of agreement
22.	Kmn	Clipping	Kemana	Where are you going
23.	PD	Acronym	Pecaya diri	Confident
24.	Td	Clipping	Tadi	Earlier
25.	Yg	Clipping	Yang	Which
26.	Bkn	Clipping	Bukan	No/not
27.	Sbb	Acronym	Sorry baru bales	Sorry for the late reply
28.	Tdk	Clipping	Tdk	No
29.	Dang	Alteration	Damn	Sial/sialan
30.	Prep	Clipping	Preparation	Persiapan
31.	Br	Clipping	Baru	New/just now
32.	Lg	Clipping	Lagi	Again/just now
33.	Bgmn	Clipping	Bagaimana	How
34.	Gym	Clipping	Gymnasium	A place to work out
35.	Ultah	Clipping	Ulang tahun	Birthday
36.	Dude		Guy/person/man	A term for a man or guy.

words that are most used by teenagers. The table shows that there are 36 kinds of slang words that the writer found from the text message that the writer had with her friend. From those 36 slang words, 13 were Indonesian slang words and the rest were English slang words. As for the type of word formation, the writer found 4 types of word formation that is used in the slang words such as clipping, alteration, multiple processes, and acronyms. However out of those 4 word formation types the most used word type formation in the slang words are clipping with a total of 21 words.

Word Formation Processes of The Slang Words

1. Clipping

A few examples for the slang words that used clipping can be found as below:

- **Ultah**

The term *ultah* is derived from clipping, which is the technique of trimming a lengthier word or phrase while maintaining its basic meaning. The whole phrase is *ulang tahun*, which means "birthday" in Indonesian. Clipping includes removing the first syllable from each word, such as *ul* from *ulang* or *tah* from *tahun*. These chopped fragments are combined to create *ultah*. This type of clipping is common in informal language and is often used to reduce or casualize discourse. It's similar to how people say *app* rather than *application* in English.

- **Ntar**

This slang term is taken from the original word "Bentar". The word's usage becomes more shortened with time. The term is formed by eliminating the prefix *-Be* and using the remainder of the word as a reduced version of it.

- **Cuz**

The slang word *cuz* is a simplified version of *because* that is commonly used in informal speech and writing. It emerged from the natural urge to simplify language in casual speech. Dropping the "be-" prefix but preserving the emphasized component of the word (*cuz*) makes it faster and easier to utter. *Cuz* is commonly used in texting, social media, and ordinary discussions to save time and convey a relaxed tone, such as "I'm late *cuz* I missed the bus."

- **Sy**

The slang term *sy* is a shortened variant of *saya*, the Indonesian word for "I" or "me." It stems from the practice of reducing written language, particularly in casual settings such as texting or social media. By employing only the initial and last letters of *saya*, *sy* becomes a faster and more effective means to communicate while remaining easily understandable. This abbreviation represents the impact of digital communication on language, where brevity is frequently emphasized. This slang word is formed by removing the vowel letter from the word.

- **U**

The slang term *u* is a shortened version of the pronoun *you*. It arose from early texting and internet messaging, where brevity was essential owing to character constraints and the necessity for speedier communication. People may text faster and still be understood by substituting the three-character word *you* with the single letter *u*. Its universal use in casual talks, texting, and social media has made it a standard of informal digital communication.

- **Ok**

The slang phrase *OK* first appeared in the United States in the nineteenth century as an abbreviation for *oll korrekt*, a funny misspelling of *all correct*. It first appeared in print in 1839, as part of a silly abbreviation trend in newspapers. *OK* eventually came to mean agreement, approval, or acknowledgement. Its simplicity and versatility have made it one of the most well-known and widely used slang phrases in the world.

- **Bro**

The term *bro* originated as a shortened variant of the word *brother*. Originally used to refer to biological brothers, the term evolved in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to address close male acquaintances or companions, highlighting friendship. The word is made by shortening the first syllable, making it easier to utter. Over time, *bro* became widely used in informal speech and pop culture, frequently representing a sense of kinship or shared experience.

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- Imma

The slang term *imma* is a shorthand for the phrase "I'm gonna," which is an abbreviated version of "I am going to". It began in AAVE as a natural phonetic simplification in speech. Combining *I'm* and *gonna* into *imma* results in a fluid and casual manner to indicate purpose or future action. The term gained significant popularity through music, social media, and informal conversation, which reflected its relaxed and conversational nature.

- Prep

The slang word *prep* is a shortened form of preparation. It is formed by taking the first few letters of preparation to create a more concise version. This abbreviation is commonly used in informal contexts, especially in texting, online communication, or casual conversations, to save time and effort. *Prep* is often used to refer to the act of getting ready or preparing for something, such as in "I need to do some *prep* before the meeting."

- Gym

The slang word *gym* is a shortened form of the word gymnasium, which originally referred to a place for physical exercise and sports. It became a common abbreviation in everyday language, especially in fitness culture, to refer to a place where people go to work out. The word *gym* is formed by removing the extra syllables of gymnasium, making it quicker and easier to say. It is now widely used to describe fitness centers or the act of exercising.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to determine what types of slang phrases teenagers use when texting each other, as well as what word formation processes are most commonly used in the slang words that teens use in their texts. In this study, the author examined the types of slang words used by teens when texting one another, as well as the most commonly employed word creation processes in the slang words. In this study, the author used Yule's (2010) theory of word production processes, as well as Eble's (2012) definition of slang words. This study employed a descriptive qualitative technique. The writer's data came from the history of her and her closest buddy texting each other on WhatsApp. The outcomes of this study discovered that the kind of slang words that teens frequently used are Indonesian slang words, which appeared a total of 23 times. The study also revealed that the most used word formation processes for the slang words are clipping, which occurred a total of 21 times.

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