

A Morphological Analysis of Slang Words Used in Tiktok Content

Apriliana^{1*}, Rugaiyah²

^{1*,2} Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan,
Universitas Islam Riau, Indonesia^{1,2}

Jl. Kaharuddin Nasution 113, Kel. Simpang Tiga, Kec. Bukit Raya, Kota Pekanbaru,
Provinsi Riau, 28284, Indonesia

^{1*}apriliana@student.uir.ac.id

²ruqaiyah@edu.uir.ac.id

Abstrak

TikTok merupakan salah satu media sosial yang digemari generasi muda dan menjadi ruang berkembangnya inovasi kebahasaan, terutama dalam bentuk *slang* digital. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengidentifikasi dan mengelompokkan jenis-jenis *slang* berdasarkan proses morfologis yang muncul dalam konten, caption, komentar, dan teks video TikTok. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data secara daring dari konten populer yang dipublikasikan antara tahun 2023 hingga 2025. Analisis dilakukan berdasarkan teori pembentukan kata menurut Yule (2022). Sebanyak 50 entri *slang* dikaji dan diklasifikasikan ke dalam lima jenis proses morfologi, yaitu: akronim, *clipping*, derivasi, *blending*, dan *coinage*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa proses yang paling dominan adalah akronim, *clipping*, derivasi, dan *blending*. Proses *coinage* tidak ditemukan dalam data. Temuan ini menunjukkan kreativitas linguistik pengguna TikTok dalam membentuk strategi komunikasi yang sekaligus membangun identitas sosial di ruang digital. *Slang* TikTok tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai bentuk bahasa, tetapi juga merefleksikan praktik budaya dan pola komunikasi kelompok dalam era digital.

Kata kunci: Slang, TikTok, Morfologi, Pembentukan Kata

Abstract

TikTok is a social media platform popular among the younger generation and a platform for the development of linguistic innovation, particularly in the form of digital slang. This study aims to identify and categorize slang types based on the morphological processes that appear in TikTok video content, captions, comments, and text. The method used is descriptive qualitative, with online data collection from popular content published between 2023 and 2025. The analysis was based on Yule's (2022) word formation theory. A total of 50 slang entries were reviewed and classified into five types of morphological processes: acronym, clipping, derivation, blending, and coinage. The results showed that the most dominant processes were acronym, clipping, derivation, and blending. Coinage was not found in the data. These findings demonstrate the linguistic creativity of TikTok users in developing communication strategies that simultaneously construct social identities in the digital space. TikTok slang not only functions as a form of language but also reflects cultural practices and group communication patterns in the digital era.

Keywords: Slang, TikTok, Morphology, Word Formation

INTRODUCTION

Social media is one of the most popular digital platforms among young people, especially TikTok. Various forms of language are used on TikTok, often referred to as slang, which continues to evolve. The slang used on TikTok tends to be spontaneous and contextually meaningful, although it is not always structured and often deviates from the original definition of the word. For instance, the word “aesthetic”, which originally referred to visual beauty, has undergone a shift in meaning within TikTok slang. It is now frequently used to express sarcasm, praise, or humor. TikTok users are heavily influenced by the way they convey messages using slang terms and popular trends or memes (Oktaviana et al. 2021). Previous research has noted that children and teenagers become increasingly familiar with slang terms they encounter on TikTok over time. This suggests that exposure to such terms enhances their understanding of word forms and their use in social contexts (Jamaludin et al. 2023). These social changes in slang represent an interesting phenomenon in the dynamics of language, particularly in the field of morphology. TikTok slang often involves the creation of new words through various creative processes such as clipping, acronym formation, affixation, and coinage, which can be seen in terms like “bestie”, “cuan,” or “gaskeun.” Morphological analysis helps document these language changes in digital spaces and reveals how word forms reflect social meaning, group identity, and youth communication styles in the digital era.

The use of slang on TikTok is part of today’s linguistic evolution and reflects the creativity of the digital generation in communication. The slang that appears in TikTok content demonstrates unique and creative word

formation processes, including clipping, blending, acronym creation, coinage, and nonstandard affixation that is rarely found in formal language. Although there have been several studies examining the emergence of slang on TikTok, research specifically addressing the morphological forms of slang in TikTok content remains limited. Several studies have shown that word formation techniques such as clipping and blending are widely used (Supri 2021). In addition, acronymization and contraction also play an important role in the digital language used by the younger generation (Dewi, 2024). On the other hand, simple monomorphemic forms are more commonly used than complex ones in digital interactions. Based on these findings, a morphological study of slang varieties in TikTok content is essential to understand how slang words are formed, interpreted, and used within social media communication.

Based on the issues outlined above, this study aims to describe and classify the morphological forms of slang found in TikTok content. This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze various word formation processes, such as acronymization, clipping, blending, and coinage as innovative forms of word creation. Previous findings have shown that forms like acronymization and contraction play a significant role in Generation Z’s digital communication (Dewi, 2024), while simple monomorphemic forms are also dominant in language use on social media (Banetri & Liusti 2023). Through the analysis and classification of these language forms, this study aims to provide insights into how morphology evolves in digital media and the use of nonstandard language.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method to analyze and identify morphological forms of slang found in TikTok content, particularly in video texts, captions, and verbal audio. The data were collected from various popular TikTok content that reflected current linguistic trends among digital users. Data collection was carried out through online documentation, which archived textual and audio elements containing slang expressions. This approach aligns with previous research, which highlights TikTok as a platform that supports the growth of various forms of slang, such as

acronyms, abbreviations, and morphemic modifications that reflect user creativity (Banetri and Liusti, 2023).

The data were analyzed using George Yule's theory of word formation, which includes processes such as clipping, blending, acronyms, derivation, and compounding as part of informal language development. The analysis focused on these processes to identify how slang is formed on TikTok. Data validity was strengthened through theoretical triangulation and comparison with findings from previous studies (Yule, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected in this study consist of 50 slang words gathered from various popular TikTok content between 2023 and 2025. These data were sourced from text within videos, captions, comments, and verbal audio that exhibit high frequency of use and relevance to digital communication on TikTok. The data were analyzed using George Yule's (2022) word-formation theory, which includes five main processes: acronym, clipping, derivation, blending, and coinage. Below is a detailed classification of the slang words identified in this study.

Table 1. Classification of TikTok Slang Based on Morphological Processes

No	Slang Term	Morphological Process	Root Word/ Origin
1	POV	Acronym	Point of View
2	FYP	Acronym	For Your Page
3	GRWM	Acronym	Get Ready With Me
4	TenQ	Blending	Ten + Q (Thank You)
5	Bussin	Derivation	Buss (slang) + in

6	OOTD	Acronym	Outfit of the Day
7	GOAT	Acronym	Greatest of All Time
8	Rizz	Clipping	Charisma
9	FYI	Acronym	For Your Information
10	Yapper	Derivation	Yap + er
11	Unfollow	Clipping	Unfollow
12	Bcs	Clipping	Because
13	Exc	Clipping	Exclusive
14	ATM	Acronym	At the Moment
15	Delulu	Clipping	Delusional
16	Sus	Clipping	Suspicious
17	L8R	Acronym	Later
18	CMIW	Acronym	Correct Me if I'm Wrong
19	GG	Acronym	Good Game
20	Outta	Blending	Out Of
21	FR	Acronym	For Real
22	Gimme	Clipping	Give me
23	Hafta	Clipping	Have to
24	Stan	Blending	Stalker + Fan
25	Bestie	Derivation	Best + ie
26	Baddie	Derivation	Bad + ie
27	TMI	Acronym	Too Much Information
28	Watcha	Blending	What are You?
29	JK	Acronym	Just Kidding
30	Dunno	Blending	Don't Know
31	TQ	Acronym	Thank You

32	W8	Acronym	Wait
33	Fav	Clipping	Favorite
34	Ytd	Acronym	Yesterday
35	J4F	Acronym	Acronym
36	TTYL	Acronym	Talk to You Later
37	JIC	Acronym	Just in Case
38	Fasho	Blending	For Sure
39	Lemm e	Blending	Let Me
40	IJBOL	Acronym	I Just Burst Out Laughing
41	Nolep	Blending	No Life
42	Prelov ed	Derivation	Pre + Loved
43	Gratz	Clipping	Congratulati ons
44	WTH	Acronym	What the Hell
45	ILY	Acronym	I Love You
46	CYT	Acronym	See You Tomorrow
47	IMO	Acronym	In my Opinion
48	PMO	Acronym	Put me on
49	Bot	Acronym	Back on Topic
50	FOMO	Acronym	Fear of Missing Out

Based on the analysis, the most dominant word formation process found in TikTok slang is acronym. Acronyms such as FYP (For Your Page), GRWM (Get Ready With Me), OOTD (Outfit of the Day), and TMI (Too Much Information) frequently appear in captions and video content on TikTok. The use of these acronyms reflects users' efforts to simplify longer phrases into shorter forms, making digital communication more efficient. This finding aligns with Yule's (2022) statement that acronyms emerge from the need for efficient communication in fast-paced informal media settings.

In addition to acronyms, the clipping process is also commonly observed. Examples such as delulu (from delusional), bcs (from because), and unfoll (from unfollow) indicate a

tendency to shorten words into simpler and more casual forms for relaxed conversation styles.

Besides acronyms and clipping, other word formation strategies such as derivation, blending, and coinage are also found in TikTok slang, reflecting the linguistic creativity of its users. Derivation is seen through the addition of suffixes like -ie or -in, as in bestie and bussin. Blending is evident in the combination of two words into a new one, such as stan (a blend of stalker and fan), which is concise yet carries strong social meaning. Based on the analysis, four morphological processes acronym, clipping, derivation, and blending consistently appear in the TikTok slang data. However, there were no examples of coinage, which refers to the complete creation of new words, as defined by Yule (2022).

From a sociolinguistic perspective, TikTok slang plays a significant role in shaping group identity, social solidarity, and youth popular culture. Terms like delulu, bestie, and GRWM serve not only as tools for communication but also as symbols of digital lifestyle and identity. TikTok acts as a virtual space where users construct social identity through linguistic expression (Kamaruddin, Adam, and Chakti 2024). This aligns with findings by Supri and Nur (2021), who stated that Supri (2021) clipping and blending are the dominant processes in digital slang formation. Furthermore, TikTok slang tends to be monomorphemic and spreads easily due to the platform's algorithmic influence and viral trends.

In conclusion, the four morphological processes from Yule's (2022) theory are proven to be relevant and reflective of TikTok slang characteristics. These processes demonstrate the linguistic creativity and innovation of younger generations, while also highlighting how language

functions as a tool for social and cultural representation in the digital era.

oneself, and strengthening social closeness among users.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the slang forms found in TikTok content demonstrate a significant morphological development. Processes such as acronyms, clipping, derivation, and blending reflect the creativity of social media users in adapting language to the fast-paced, informal, and expressive nature of digital communication. These four word-formation processes illustrate how language responds adaptively to the dynamics of social and digital culture. Moreover, the use of concise yet meaningful words serves as a tool for constructing identity, expressing

This study recommends that future research expand its focus to the semantic and pragmatic aspects of slang usage, with the aim of exploring its contextual meanings and communicative functions in digital conversations. Furthermore, due to its dynamic nature and relevance among the younger generation, TikTok slang also has the potential to be used as a resource for language learning and digital literacy. In this way, students can gain a deeper understanding that language is a constantly evolving social phenomenon closely tied to the digital communication platforms they engage with in their daily lives.

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