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**THE FORM AND FUNCTION OF SLANG EXPRESSIONS ON THE  
THREAD SOCIAL MEDIA (@MedanTalkViral)**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This research examined the dynamic evolution of slang in the context of Medan, exploring its formation, diverse expressions, and functions in everyday interactions. It focused on the comment section of the @Medantalkviral account on the Thread platform. The study employed Yanchung and Yanhong (2013) elaboration theory, supported by Fisherman (1972), to understand the meanings of slang expressions. The approach examined how these expressions were articulated in texts, whether fully or partially, in order to gain a nuanced understanding. Using observation and recording techniques, including screenshots, the data consisted of words and comments from Medan residents via the social media account @Medantalkviral. The analysis employed analogy and intralingual methods, revealing 12 newly invented slang expressions on social media. The results showed a variety of slang forms, including words, phrases, clauses, and sentences, with identified linguistic functions such as identity, kinship/politeness, emotional expression, directive function, and referential function. This study contributed to a broader understanding of linguistic phenomena in the digital age and the multifaceted nature of slang in social interactions.*

Keyword: *Language variation, Slang expressions, Thread, Medan talk viral*

**INTRODUCTION**

Every community, as Fishman (1972) asserts, possesses three distinct levels of language styles: formal language, colloquial language (everyday language), and informal language. Slang falls under the category of informal language, offering a unique form of expression. While colloquial language, characterized by informality, is applicable to both oral and written communication, it remains a part of Standard English. In contrast, slang, representing an informal style, is employed by specific social or ethnic groups, such as teenagers, serving purposes distinct from common colloquial use. Furthermore, Coleman (1995) classifies slang into different forms, with social function being one category. This classification emphasizes that slang evolves over time, highlighting its dynamic nature within linguistic evolution.

To illustrate the difference between colloquial and slang, consider the word "nana" in English. In colloquial language, "nana" means "banana," whereas in slang, it takes on the meaning of "fool." This distinction becomes particularly evident within specific social groups, where language is employed to convey secret messages using signs, words, or phrases, deviating from grammatical rules or proper word structures.

The importance of researching slang expressions is underscored by its prevalence among teenagers in the realm of social media. In today's digital era, slang is frequently used in text messages, social media platforms, and everyday communication. This phenomenon is crucial to study as slang in this context evolves rapidly, often with meanings distinct from formal language use. Moreover, language style research is pertinent for understanding societal communication, interaction dynamics, and message comprehension across diverse cultural contexts. It sheds light on how language development adapts to shifts in social groups and overall socio-cultural changes.

Slang remains widely used on various social media platforms, including the latest one, Thread. For this research, Thread serves as the chosen platform due to its popularity, particularly among young people. The focus is on the @Medantalkviral Twitter account, associated with a news and information broadcasting agency covering updates about Medan. This account's popularity, evident from its substantial follower count, makes it a valuable source for exploring the forms and functions of slang expressions among young people.

The study's relevance is further emphasized by previous research, such as Sudrajat's (2017) examination of dialect, vulgar language, and slang in high school students' Facebook status posts. However, there is a notable gap in understanding how to classify and differentiate the types of slang expressions, a gap that this research aims to fill based on linguistic theories.

Building on previous studies, this research seeks to delve deeper into the forms and functions of slang expressions, particularly within the unique context of Medan. By focusing on the @Medantalkviral account, the study aims to contribute valuable insights into the evolving nature of slang expressions and their classifications.

## **METHOD**

In this research, a descriptive qualitative approach was adopted as the methodological framework, guided by Creswell's (2013) definition of qualitative research. This approach emphasized the exploration and in-depth understanding of individual experiences, attitudes, perceptions, and social contexts within real-world situations. To illuminate the phenomena

under study, observation and recording techniques were employed, with 14 screenshots presented in the discussion section to underscore both the volume and frequency of data extracted from the comment section of the @medantalkviral account on the Thread platform.

For data analysis, the intralingual equivalence approach was chosen. This method aimed to identify similarities within one language by finding equivalent expressions that closely captured the meaning of slang terms. For instance, the combination of two words, such as "fresh meat" equating to a "rookie" or newly trained individual, exemplified the application of this method. The intralingual equivalence method allowed for a detailed examination of slang usage in the specific cultural and social contexts of Medan, shedding light on differences in meanings and contexts inherent in these expressions.

In presenting the data analysis, an informal approach was adopted, using a string of words to elucidate research findings in a relaxed language style. By explaining each slang classification, this presentation method allowed for a nuanced understanding of how slang transitioned between classifications. This approach was deliberately unconfined by a rigid format, facilitating a closer connection with the reader through familiar language styles, without compromising the precision and accuracy of the analysis.

In summary, this research methodology combined a descriptive qualitative approach with suitable data collection techniques and analysis methods, aligning with the research objectives. Through this approach, the aim was to provide an in-depth understanding of slang language usage in Medan residents' communication on social media, exploring its cultural and social implications. In the final report, potential limitations, such as the subjective nature of qualitative research and potential biases in data collection, were acknowledged to enhance the transparency and reliability of the study's outcomes.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The research findings reveal a diversity of slang language variations within the comment section of the @Medantalkviral social media account on the Thread platform. These variations encompass basic words, acronyms, and repetitions. The prevailing type of phrase identified is endocentric, characterized by the presence of independent clauses within clauses and the use of single sentences in overall sentence structure. Additionally, some words are interrelated, showcasing an intralingual approach to identify correlations. This approach aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the slang, with careful consideration given to its meaning, often embellished with anecdotes or satire to emphasize users' ideas in their social media interactions.

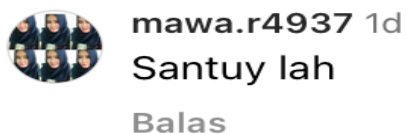
After completing the research, the researchers identified two slang expressions involving basic words, one involving terms of rephrasing, one using acronyms, one in the form of a phrase, one in the form of a clause, and one in the form of a sentence, each serving specific functions. The primary objective was to discern the characteristics of slang that could be beneficial in colloquial usage. In contrast to Bourdieu's (2018) previous research, which focused on the form of slang, the writer delved into the functions of slang, particularly its impact on society, especially among teenagers and Gen Z college students.

The researchers perceived slang as a marker of social identity, reflecting the speaker's affiliation with a specific group or subculture. The exploration of slang contributed to a deeper understanding of how language constructs and expresses social identity. Many slang expressions were closely associated with youth culture and various subcultures. Awareness and understanding of slang, especially for educators, parents, and individuals working with young people, could enhance communication and engagement.

Despite recognizing the limitations imposed by stacked sources, the writer aimed to bridge the gap left by previous researchers, particularly Bourdieu (2018). The study not only delved into the form of slang but also examined its functions, particularly its influence on colloquial communication within society, notably among teenagers and Gen Z college students. Forms of slang expressions discovered on the social media account @medantalkviral within the thread section were diverse, encompassing basic words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. These forms were detailed as follows:

### *The form of Slang Expression*

Slang expressions in the form of basic words



**Picture 1. Comment 1**

Slang language, especially in its basic word form, is an essential part of language that continually evolves and reflects trends, social developments, and culture within society. For example, we can observe the word "santuy" in slang language. The word "santuy" is a basic word form that is a variation of the formal word "santai," which means "relaxed." The use of this word demonstrates how language can change and adapt to the communication needs of specific social groups.

Basic words in slang language often derive from words that already exist in formal language. In this case, "santai" is the formal word used to describe a relaxed and calm atmosphere. However, when we shift to the word "santuy," we enter the realm of informal slang language. The use of "santuy" emphasizes the aspect of relaxation while also conveying the enthusiasm and relaxed nature of the younger generation in their daily lives.



### Picture 2. Comment 2

The word "mimin" is one concrete example of how slang language can develop in the digital environment, particularly on social media platforms and among young people in the city of Medan. This expression is widely used by the community, especially the younger generation, as an informal way to refer to an "admin" or a person responsible for managing a social media account.

Although "mimin" is essentially a basic word used to refer to an admin, the usage and spread of this expression illustrate how people and young groups tend to modify or create new words in their own language. This may be done to create a sense of familiarity, exclusivity, or even humor in their everyday communication. It also demonstrates the flexibility of language in responding to cultural and technological developments.

### Slang expressions in terms of rephrase



The results of this research reflect the importance of understanding the use of slang expressions with reduplication in informal communication, especially among young people. An example of the expression "paok aja sok-sok beli onlen" demonstrates how the reduplicated word "sok-sok" is used to describe behavior that is pretentious or acting as if.

In formal language, this expression can be interpreted as "So foolish, pretending to know online shopping." It portrays someone attempting to display knowledge or expertise they don't actually possess, particularly in the context of online shopping. In conclusion, the slang expression with reduplication found in the comments section of the @medantalkviral account is "sok-sok an." When translated into formal language, it would be "So foolish, pretending to know about online shopping." So, in informal contexts, particularly among young people, when they use the term "sok-sok," it serves as an equivalent for "pura-pura" in a more formal context.

#### Slang expression in terms of acronym



#### Picture 4. Comment 4

Slang expressions in the form of acronyms are a popular way to abbreviate or refer to a concept or phrase in everyday language. These acronyms are often used to save time and facilitate communication in informal conversations. Slang expressions in the form of acronyms are commonly found in both Indonesian and English acronyms. The word "BU" stands for "butuh uang" (need money). As for an example of a slang expression in the form of an acronym from the English language commonly used by the people, especially young people in Medan, is the word "OTW," which stands for "on the way."



#### Picture 5. Comment 5

Another example of a slang expression in the form of an acronym is the word "OTW," which stands for "On The Way." In slang language, "OTW" is used to indicate that someone is en route to a specific place or location. This acronym is used in text messages, online chats, or everyday communication to inform others that someone is on their way and will arrive shortly. The use of "OTW" is an example of

how acronyms can be an efficient tool for communicating quickly and simply in slang language.

#### Slang expressions in terms of phrase



#### Picture 6. Comment 6

From the quoted comment in a column, it's clear that a slang phrase in the form of a phrase is "pekan senen." This phrase is an equivalent or variation of the formal phrase "pasar senin," which is used to refer to a shopping place or market in the city of Medan known as "Pasar Senin." As additional information, the word "pekan" in the speech of the people of Medan is used interchangeably with the word "pasar."

In slang language, "pekan senen" becomes a more casual or familiar way for the locals to refer to the intended place. This reflects how slang language often combines official words or phrases in a less formal or local manner, thus creating a more unique and specific language for a particular community.

#### Slang expressions in terms of clause



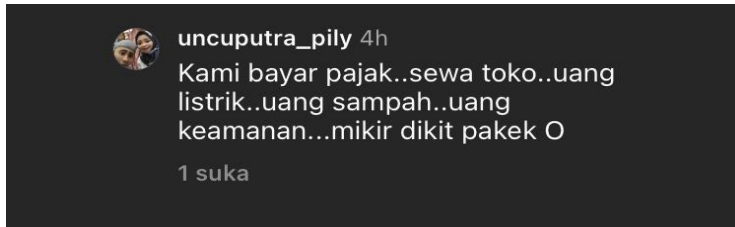
#### Picture 7. Comment 7

The second comment above is an example of a slang expression in the form of a clause. When translated into a more formal language, it means, "Apparently, I'm not the only one who thinks realistically like this." However, in that sentence, there is the use of slang words indicated by words like "cuman" and "gueh," which are expressions of colloquial language.

In more detail, this clause reflects the use of slang within a formal sentence. The word "cuman" is used as an equivalent to "hanya" (only). Although in formal language, one should use the word "hanya," in slang, the word "cuman" is more commonly used, especially by young people in Medan. Additionally, the word "gueh"

is also common slang used by young people in big cities. In the context of this sentence, "gueh" is used as a variation of "saya" or "aku" (I or me), but with a more casual and familiar style.

Slang expressions in terms of sentence



**Picture 8. Comment 8**

In the second comment above, there is slang indicated by the word "pajak." The word "pajak" is commonly used by young people, and even parents in Medan often use it in their daily language. The term "pajak" refers to the name of a traditional marketplace located in Medan. "Pajak" can be equated with the word "traditional market" or "market." In the sentence, there is also the word "O," which is an abbreviation for saying "otak" (brain). However, young people in Medan tend to shorten and pronounce it as just the phoneme "O" when referring to the word "otak."

The slang language in the second comment above is also categorized as slang style in the form of a sentence, marked by the presence of sentence structure. When translated into a more formal language, it would be "We pay for the market, rent a shop, pay for electricity, and security. So, think using your brain."

*The Function of Slang Expressions on the social media account @medantalkviral in the Thread platform.*

According to the theory of Yanchung and Yanhong (2013), there are three main functions of slang. Firstly, slang is used to seek self-identity, thus distinguishing various social and professional groups. Secondly, slang can convey emotional feelings and influence the listener's feelings about a subject. Thirdly, slang can be used to achieve politeness in social communication, although its usage should be considered not to damage social relationships. In various contexts, the use of slang can help maintain friendships and create a suitable atmosphere. as the following session you can see the part of it

- as self-identity

### Komentar



#### Picture 9. Comment 9

In the above comment section, an instance of slang was found, commonly used by the youth in Medan, known as the phrase "nak medan." This phrase can be interpreted as someone who holds authority over a certain area and is feared by the people around due to their arbitrary and self-aggrandizing behavior, believing themselves to be great and powerful. This slang expression is substituted by "Preman" or "Gengster," which means thug or gangster. The slang phrase "Nak Metal" is adopted as an identity that signifies that every thug is known for their power, audacity, and arrogance. It is also used as a means to strengthen their self-image within their community.

- conveying emotional feeling



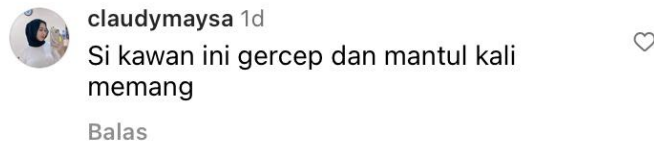
#### Picture 10. Comment 10

The slang expression in the above comment is the word "Paok," which can be equated to the word "fool." This slang expression serves the function of conveying and venting the speaker's feelings toward the person in question. In a post on one of the social media accounts, @Medantalkviral, it was reported that there was a disturbance between a courier and a buyer, and the buyer was considered at fault in the context. Consequently, many people and young individuals taunted and made derogatory comments about the mentioned buyer. This reflects the emotional outpouring of society's disapproval of the perpetrator.

Slang that functions to convey emotional feelings can have connections with a group or culture. Slang like "paok" often has specific meanings or connotations within particular groups or cultures. People who use this slang will quickly understand its

meaning, while outsiders may need it explained to them. Lastly, slang as a vehicle for conveying emotional feelings can also be used for emphasis.

-reaching communication politeness and keeping a friendliness

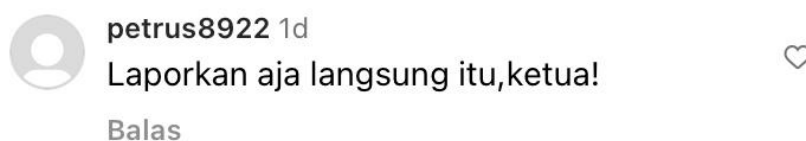


### Picture 11. Comment 11

However, the researcher believes that in addition to the theory of Yanchung and Yanhong, the Fishman (1972) theory should be added. Therefore, the researcher chose the Fishman theory to complement the answers to the research question to elaborate on the functions of slang expressions in the daily speech of the Medan community found on the Thread platform. Additional functions of slang expressions include:

- Directive function

The directive function of slang is a function used to regulate or influence the behavior of the listener. In communication, speakers use sentences containing commands, suggestions, prohibitions, or other instructions to influence the actions or behaviors of the listener. However, in the context of slang, commands, suggestions, or prohibitions are often conveyed using more relaxed, informal language and utilizing slang vocabulary that may only be understood by specific group members.



### Picture 12. Comment 12

The slang expression referred to in this example is the word "ketua." In this context, "ketua" does not refer to a position or someone holding the highest position in an organization, but it is an informal address from one person to another, specifically addressing a male individual. In the city of Medan, people often use the term "ketua" as a way to address someone, rather than using their specific name when addressing one man to another.

The slang expression here emphasizes that someone should take strong action regarding what is being discussed in the context. In other words, it is an order or directive to carry out the speaker's wishes.

-as referential function

In slang, the referential function still revolves around discussing objects or events in the speaker's environment, just like in non-slang language usage. However, in the slang context, those objects or events might be described or conveyed using informal words or phrases. Slang can be used to refer to something uniquely or unconventionally, depending on the slang vocabulary being employed.



### **Picture 13. Comment 13**

Eventually, Researching slang enhances our comprehension of how language is utilized to build and convey social identity. Numerous slang terms are linked to both youth culture and diverse subcultures. For educators, parents, and those interacting with young individuals, possessing knowledge of and familiarity with slang can improve communication and interaction. However, it's important to acknowledge that limitations in the findings exist, as the sources used are numerous and interconnected, a characteristic integral to the form and function of slang itself.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

Based on the data analysis conducted, several points can be summarized as follows. In the comment section of the social media account @Medantalkviral on the Thread platform, various forms of slang language variations were found, including basic words, acronyms, and repetitions. The type of phrases that appear are endocentric phrases, while for clauses there are independent clauses, and in the use of sentences there are single sentences. In the context of the function of language variation in the commentary section, it can be seen that slang serves as an identity marker, conveys emotional feelings, forms social bonds, gives instructions or commands (directive function), and refers to objects or events around the speaker (referential function). In addition, the author also suggests that readers conduct more

in-depth and comprehensive research on the forms and functions of language used by the youth in Medan. For example, further research could delve deeper into their use of slang words in their conversations, each with different functions, to understand how they convey messages and their communicative goals. Therefore, the author emphasizes the importance of continuing to develop an understanding of the prevalent use of slang styles today and calls for collaboration among various parties to conduct more extensive and comprehensive research in this area. This will make a valuable contribution to understanding the dynamics of language and culture in the context of youth culture.

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