

Exploring the semantic meaning and structure of slang in instagram captions

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ABSTRAK

Artikel ini mengkaji aspek semantik dari penggunaan kosakata slang dalam caption Instagram. Bahasa bersifat dinamis dan terus berkembang, terutama dalam komunikasi digital di mana ekspresi informal seperti slang sering digunakan. Slang mencerminkan identitas sosial, rasa kebersamaan, serta gaya komunikasi modern. Penelitian ini menganalisis makna leksikal dan kontekstual dari sejumlah kosakata slang serta proses pembentukan katanya seperti akronim, pemotongan (clipping), dan bentuk imitasi. Hasil temuan menunjukkan bahwa akronim merupakan bentuk paling dominan, yang menunjukkan preferensi terhadap kepraktisan dalam interaksi daring. Penggunaan slang di Instagram tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai alat ekspresi, tetapi juga sebagai representasi budaya digital. Namun, penggunaan slang yang berlebihan atau tidak tepat dapat menyebabkan miskomunikasi, khususnya antar generasi atau dalam konteks formal. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dalam pemahaman mengenai adaptasi bahasa terhadap platform baru dan memberikan wawasan terhadap fungsi semantik dari bahasa slang daring.

ABSTRAK

This article discusses the semantic aspects of slang terms used in Instagram captions. Language is dynamic and constantly evolving, especially in digital communication where informal expressions like slang are prevalent. Slang reflects social identity, group belonging, and modern communication styles. This study analyzes the lexical and contextual meanings of selected slang words, as well as their word formation processes such as acronyms, clipping, and imitative forms. The findings reveal that acronyms are the most dominant formation, indicating a preference for brevity and convenience in online interaction. Slang on Instagram serves not only as a tool of expression but also as a representation of digital culture. However, excessive or inappropriate use of slang may lead to miscommunication, especially across different generations or formal settings. This research contributes to understanding how language adapts to new platforms and offers insight into the semantic functions of online slang.

Introduction

Semua Language is inherently flexible and dynamic, constantly evolving alongside human development (Nizar, 2024). It plays a vital role in everyday life as a medium for communication, expression, and identity. The functions of language include communication, identity expression, play, creativity, and emotional release (Crystal et al., 2021). Miscommunication may arise when audiences fail to grasp the intended



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meaning, highlighting the importance of linguistic study (Niswa, 2023). Linguistics seeks to understand the origins, structure, and evolution of language (Khansir, 2023).

One important branch of linguistics is semantics, the study of meaning in language. Semantics helps determine the accurate meaning of words and phrases, reducing ambiguity and enhancing clarity in communication (Niswa, 2023). The ability to interpret meaning is essential, especially in today's diverse linguistic landscape.

In everyday usage, semantics is vital to ensure that messages are conveyed and understood properly. Since language is used by all age groups with various intentions and styles, certain groups develop their own terms—one of which is slang (Darmawan, 2023). Slang is a form of informal language often used by specific communities to express themselves and build rapport (Yusuf et al., 2022). Slang is widely used on social media platforms such as Instagram, particularly in the captions feature.

Instagram captions are textual descriptions accompanying photos or videos, offering insights or messages to viewers. This study focuses on analyzing the slang used in Instagram captions, identifying its semantic features, meanings, and the linguistic processes behind its formation. The aim is to understand how slang conveys expression, identity, and meaning in a digital context.

Findings

This section presents the findings based on data collected from Instagram captions across various accounts. The analysis focuses on identifying slang terms, their meanings, and word formation processes.

1. Slang Terms and Their Meanings

From the data above, **acronyms** are the most dominant form of slang, representing users' tendency to shorten expressions for quick, convenient communication. Other forms such as **clipping** and **imitative expressions** are also evident.

Slang enhances communication by creating a sense of belonging and relevance among users. However, the lack of standardization may lead to misinterpretation—especially among different age groups or in formal contexts. Understanding slang in digital environments is crucial for both users and scholars of language.

1. A LIST OF SLANG TERMS USED IN CAPTIONS INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS

No.	Slang	Abbreviation	Lexical meaning	Contextual meaning
1.	TIA	Thanks In Advance	Used in an <u>email</u> when you <u>ask</u> someone for <u>information</u> or <u>want</u> them to do something for you.	Shows politeness and the expectation that the

				request or assistance will be well received.
2.	C MON	Come On	An informal call for encouragement, asking someone to move faster, or expressing doubt.	Used to encourage, motivate, or show disbelief in a casual tone.
3.	ASAP	As Soon As	As soon as possible, showing urgency.	Usually used to ask for something to be completed immediately, often in the context of work or tasks.
4.	BTW	By The Way	By the way, it is used to insert additional information informally.	Used to divert or add new information in casual conversation.
5.	LOL	Laugh Out	Laughing out loud, expressing happiness or joking in text form.	Showing a funny or humorous reaction to a statement.
6.	OTW	On The Way	In the journey, heading to place.	Inform someone of your departure or arrival status informally.
7.	ILY	I Love You	Expression of love to someone.	Usually used in romantic relationships or affection for family/close friends.
8.	DIY	Do It By Yourself	Do it yourself, usually related to a project or creative work.	9. Used to indicate independence or a method of doing

				something without professional help.
9.	VIP	Very Important Person	A very important or influential person.	Used to refer to the status of someone who is respected or has exclusive access.
10.	TOY	Thinking Of You	Thinking of you, an expression of concern or affection.	Used to show empathy, concern, or love for someone.
11.	BF	Boy Friend	Boyfriend in a romantic context.	Refers to one's male partner informally.
12.	OOTD	Outfit Of The Day	Clothes worn on a particular day, usually posted on social media.	Used to show off one's daily style of dress, often on Instagram or other platforms.
13.	2 DAY	Today	Today, an informal abbreviation.	Used to emphasize or speed up conversation about the day's activities.
14.	SWL	Screaming With Laughter	Laughing very loudly, often excessively in a humorous context.	Usually used in response to something that is considered very funny.
15.	AFAIK	As Far As I Know	As far as i know, indicates the limits of one's knowledge.	Used to provide information that may not be completely

				accurate or complete.
16.	GOOD BLESS U		May god bless you, an expression of prayer or good wishes.	Usually said after someone sneezes or to give good wishes in a particular situation.

2. TABLE OF SLANG AND WORD FORMATION

No	Slang	Word Formation
1	TIA	Acronym
2	C MON	Clipping
3	ASAP	Acronym
4	BTW	Acronym
5	LOL	Acronym
6	OTW	Acronym
7	ILY	Acronym
8	DIY	Clipping
9	VIP	Clipping
10	TOY	Clipping
11	BF	Filipant
12	OOTD	Acronym
13	2 DAY	Clipping
14	SWL	Acronym
15	AFAIK	Acronym
16	GOD BLESS U	Imitative

In the problem formulation , there are two issues that need to be addressed in this study, the first concerns the type of slang and the second focuses on the meanings of slang words. The data is taken from the captions of several instagram accounts. Based on the data provided, the most dominant word formation type is

acronyms, with 8 examples: asap, btw, lol, otw, ily, ootd, swl, afaik. There are 6 types of clipping: c mon, diy, vip, toy, 2 day, filipant type: bf, And imitate type: God bless. Through an analysis of Instagram captions, a diverse range of slang terms was identified. These terms, which have become increasingly prevalent in online communication, reflect the dynamic nature of language and its adaptation to digital platforms.(Darmawan & Rahman, 2023)

The identified slang terms can be categorized based on their word formation processes such as acronyms, clipping, flippant, and imitative. Slang serves as a powerful tool for online communication, enabling users to express themselves concisely and creatively. It fosters a sense of community and belonging among users who share similar interests and cultural references. Additionally, slang can reflect evolving social trends and cultural norms.

However, it is important to note that the use of slang can also pose challenges. Misinterpretation can occur, particularly among individuals from different cultural backgrounds or generations. Furthermore, excessive use of slang may hinder effective communication in formal settings.

Conclusion

This research delves into the prevalent use of slang terms within Instagram captions. By analyzing a diverse range of accounts, the study identifies and categorizes various slang terms based on their word formation processes, including acronyms, clipping, flippant forms, and imitative expressions.

The findings highlight the significance of slang in contemporary online communication. It serves as a tool for concise and creative expression, fostering a sense of community among users. However, the research also acknowledges the potential challenges associated with slang, such as misinterpretation and its limitations in formal contexts. By understanding the nuances of slang and its evolving nature, individuals can navigate the digital landscape more effectively and engage in meaningful online interactions.

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