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# Analysis of Slang Language Among Generation Alpha in Social Interaction on the TikTok Application

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**Abstract**

*This research analyzes the use of slang in the Alpha generation in social interaction in the TikTok application. In the era of Society 5.0, technological developments have influenced language changes, especially in the context of social media which encourages the spread of new terms and slang. Slang serves as a tool to simplify communication, create group identity, and strengthen social connections among the younger generation. The Alpha generation who were born and raised in the digital environment showed openness to linguistic innovation by modifying words and creating new terms that are relevant to their experiences. However, the use of this slang language also triggers a communication gap with the older generation, who may not understand the terms. Through TikTok video observation and content analysis, this study found that slang language not only creates humor but also allows for more free and unique self-expression. The use of these new terms reflects the Alpha generation's rapid adaptation to technology and challenges to conventional communication norms. Overall, this research shows that TikTok plays a big role in accelerating language change and shaping the identity of the Alpha generation as well as creating unique dynamics in the current digital era.*
***Keywords:*** *Slang, Alpha Generation, Tiktok, Communication Gap*

**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini menganalisis penggunaan bahasa slang pada generasi Alpha dalam interaksi sosial di aplikasi TikTok. Dalam era Society 5.0, perkembangan teknologi telah mempengaruhi perubahan bahasa, khususnya dalam konteks media sosial yang mendorong penyebaran istilah baru dan bahasa gaul. Bahasa slang berfungsi sebagai alat untuk menyederhanakan komunikasi, menciptakan identitas kelompok, dan memperkuat koneksi sosial di kalangan generasi muda. Generasi Alpha yang lahir dan tumbuh dalam lingkungan digital menunjukkan keterbukaan terhadap inovasi linguistik dengan memodifikasi kata-kata dan menciptakan istilah baru yang relevan dengan pengalaman mereka. Namun, penggunaan bahasa slang ini juga dapat memicu kesenjangan komunikasi dengan generasi yang lebih tua, yang mungkin tidak memahami istilah-istilah tersebut. Melalui observasi video TikTok dan analisis konten, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa bahasa slang tidak hanya menciptakan humor tetapi juga memungkinkan ekspresi diri yang lebih bebas dan unik. Plumenggunaan istilah-istilah baru ini mencerminkan adaptasi cepat generasi Alpha terhadap teknologi dan tantangan terhadap norma komunikasi konvensional. Secara keseluruhan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa TikTok berperan besar dalam mempercepat perubahan bahasa dan membentuk identitas generasi Alpha serta menciptakan dinamika budaya yang unik di era digital saat ini
**Kata Kunci:** Bahasa Slang, Generasi Alpha, Tiktok, Kesenjangan Komunikasi

## Introduction

Individuals born from 2010 onward are referred to as Generation Alpha. According to Yeni (2015), this term was first introduced by social researcher Mark McCrindle, who defined them as children born after 2010 who would become the most internet-immersed generation of all time. Projections suggest that Gen A will be inseparable from digital gadgets, less socially interactive in traditional settings, less creative, and more individualistic. Gen Alpha represents the generation succeeding Generation Z, comprising those born between 2011 and 2025. They are considered the most digitally adept and technologically literate generation to date (Astapenko, 2021; Feith, 2020; Hutalaju, 2024). Raised alongside advanced technologies such as smartphones, tablets, iPads, and other digital devices, their continuous device usage carries the potential risk of social alienation. Beyond entertainment, digital devices serve an integral role in their education, with online learning and educational applications embedded in their instructional processes. Given this unique background, Generation Alpha is expected to become highly educated in leveraging digital tools while demonstrating innovation and strong potential to drive positive change through digital fluency and heightened social awareness.

Informal language is utilized in non-formal settings, such as casual conversations among peers, and is characterized by flexibility, everyday expressions, and a relaxed tone (Holmes, 2001). Slang functions as a primary medium for Generation Alpha to express personal feelings and experiences. This environment contrasts sharply with the childhood experiences of their parents, leading to scenarios where Gen Alpha children surpass their parents in technological literacy (McCrindle, 2020). Parental openness toward their children's slang and communication styles fosters closer, warmer intergenerational communication. The slang used by Generation Alpha differs markedly from that of prior generations incorporating terms such as *"skibidi"* (denoting something bad, low-quality, or evil), *"rizz"* (referring to romantic charm or charisma), and *"sigma"* (describing a self-reliant, dominant individual). These linguistic shifts create generational divides with parents who may not follow such trends. In daily interactions, Gen Alpha frequently uses concise phrases and slang terms, generating communication gaps with older generations. Informal slang in daily interactions is characterized by brevity and creativity (Mastuti, 2008, p. 57).

Current digital technology development is defined by the integration of technology into nearly every facet of daily life. Information and communication technology advancements systematically influence human activity. Daily routines involve continuous exposure to technology, which can introduce behavioral challenges if individuals are not properly educated in digital literacy (Gui et al., 2017; Mulyati & Nurhayat, 2020). Driven by globalization and the demand for rapid information exchange, communication technology plays a vital role. Digital platforms and social media have undergone significant transformations, evolving into essential tools for communication, information dissemination, and entertainment. Among these platforms, TikTok launched in 2016 has grown into a globally dominant social media platform, particularly among younger demographics,including Generation Alpha.

TikTok is exceptionally popular among young users, serving as a primary space for self-expression, social interaction, and information access in the digital era. With over 100 million downloads on the Google Play Store, TikTok has established a massive user base in Indonesia (Winardo, 2018, p. 4). The platform's focus on short-form videos ranging from 15 seconds to 3 minutes enables users to create, share, and consume content efficiently. Powered by an algorithmic recommendation system, TikTok delivers personalized content while offering interactive features such as likes, comments, shares, duets, and stitches to facilitate user

engagement. Generation Alpha shows a strong preference for TikTok over text-heavy platforms like X (formerly Twitter), driven by its short video format and rich feature set. Gen Alpha users frequently create TikTok content comparing their generational slang with the language used by prior generations.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

TikTok is a relatively new social media platform that relies on its capability as a short-form video sharing space for 15-second videos (Alizen, 2023). TikTok became one of the most popular social media channels from 2021 to 2024, with users spanning across more than 150 countries. Although released in China in 2016, its user base has increased significantly worldwide each year, making it one of the leading short-form video platforms that captured international attention with over 3 billion global downloads. Features such as algorithmic personalization, viral challenges, and music integration make TikTok appealing to diverse audiences.Furthermore, TikTok has successfully created trends that unite global communities through creative and interactive content (Aksiografi.com, 2023).

TikTok serves as a destination for short-form video content accessible to anyone via mobile devices (Hutany et al., 2021). The short-video platform has garnered significant public attention as one of the most downloaded applications (Fatimah, 2018). Social media platforms like TikTok have driven major transformations in human communication dynamics (Pratiwi et al., 2021). Language usage tends to be more informal, rapid, and unconstrained by formal linguistic rules. The platform allows users to freely express themselves through text,images, and videos. Additionally, TikTok fosters the creation of neologisms, slang, and unique phrases frequently used by youth to interact and exchange ideas (Situmorang et al., 2024). These shifts in language usage highlight how social media influences communication dynamics among its users.

Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2010) and Generation Alpha (born after 2010) have grown up amid rapid technological advancements and the rise of social media (Oktaviasary et al., 2024). This environment shapes their communication style, favoring rapid, practical, and creative language. On TikTok, for instance,they frequently use slang and rapidly evolving terms, creating ever-changing communication trends. The platform enables them to share self-expression, participate in trends, and adopt unique linguistic forms absent in traditional communication media (Adriani et al., 2024).

Slang functions as a mechanism to simplify communication. Generation Alpha frequently uses abbreviated words or acronyms to accelerate interactions within a fast-paced digital ecosystem. This phenomenon reflects their efficient, mobile-oriented lifestyle, where they are accustomed to concise, rapid information processing.The adoption of these terms serves as a driver of a practical, accessible online communication culture.

The growth of slang has accelerated alongside technological progress that facilitates global information and cultural dissemination. As an integral component of this technological shift, social media plays a major role in accelerating the adoption of new terms, enabling millions of users to rapidly integrate them into daily communication. Sofyaningrum and Hidayah (2023) posit that rapid technological evolution in the Society 5.0 era has altered language patterns, particularly in social media interactions, driving the spread of new terminology. This demonstrates how technological development influences both the form and function of language, specifically regarding slang (Sofyaningrum et al., 2024). As explained by

Adam (2025), information and communication technology exerts a significant impact on the Indonesian language, producing both positive and negative outcomes.

The dissemination of slang among Generation Alpha exhibits a distinct pattern. Driven by social media algorithms, new terms spread rapidly; viral videos or popular content featuring slang often trigger widespread adoption by other users. Consequently, social media serves as the primary engine for the formation and dissemination of slang, accelerating linguistic evolution among the younger generation.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method, selected to describe, analyze, and understand the use of slang by Generation Alpha in social interactions on the TikTok application. The analytical framework is based on the data analysis technique by Miles and Huberman (as cited in Sugiyono, 2015), which comprises three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Relevant literature regarding theories on Generation Alpha's slang usage in TikTok social interactions further supports this research framework.

The primary instrument in this study is the researcher. The researcher acts as the main observer to closely examine how Generation Alpha utilizes slang to communicate in the digital era through video content and comment sections on TikTok as a form of identity contestation. The data collection technique involves gathering data items that exhibit shifts in word meaning alongside academic articles relevant to the research topic.

Based on the three-stage data analysis model, the data reduction phase focuses on aggregating relevant data related to semantic shifts and the characteristics of Generation Alpha on TikTok. Once collected, the data are analyzed using precise diction. In the second stage, data display, the collected data and information are systematically organized by the researcher. In the final stage, conclusion drawing, the data are classified and described, enabling the researcher to categorize the semantic shifts in slang used by Generation Alpha.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Slang language constitutes an essential element of Generation Alpha's communication, particularly on the TikTok platform. Raised in an era of rapid digital technology advancement, Generation Alpha utilizes TikTok not merely for entertainment, but as a space for self-expression and social interaction. Within this context, slang functions to establish group identity, strengthen social connections, and keep pace with evolving cultural trends. TikTok's algorithm prioritizes trend-based content, accelerating the dissemination and adoption of new slang. Features such as hashtags, video challenges, and interactive comment sections encourage users to participate in a collective dialogue often driven by slang. Consequently, TikTok actively shapes the social interactions and communication patterns of Generation Alpha while reflecting the unique cultural dynamics of the digital age.

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach to provide an in-depth account of the slang phenomenon among Generation Alpha on TikTok. The method aims to elucidate the usage patterns of slang along with its underlying social contexts. Data were collected through multiple techniques, including direct observation of TikTok videos containing slang expressions, alongside content and comment analysis. This empirical process enabled the

researchers to capture the natural occurrence of slang within Generation Alpha's social interactions on the platform.

## FINDINGS

**Table 1.** *Slang Terms and Semantic Shifts Among Generation Alpha*

| **Slang Term** | Original/Literal Meaning |
|---|---|
| Sigma | The 18th letter of the Greek alphabet, Refers to someone who is popular, cool, independent, or a dominant leader. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Skibidi | Originates from viral meme culture (*Skibidi Toilet*). Carries a negative connotation, referring to something bad, trashy, or cool/weird depending on tone; typically used to denote low quality or undesirable behavior. |
| Ohio | A U.S. state. Used as a synonym for anything weird, chaotic, bizarre, or embarrassing. |
| Rizz | Truncation of the word "charisma." Refers to romantic charm, charisma, or the ability to effortlessly attract or seduce someone. |
| Mewing | Originally an oral posture technique to reshape the jawline. Refers to a facial posture or finger gesture emphasizing a defined jawline to look cool; contextually used to signal attractiveness or to silence someone while looking stylish. |
| Negative aura | Literal energy field surrounding an entity. Denotes a bad vibe, uncool presence, or unfavorable reputation; typically used when someone acts cringe, fails, or exhibits a bad influence. |
| Cap | "Cap" literally refers to a head covering."Cap" means lying or exaggerating, whereas "no cap" means telling the truth, being authentic, or being serious. |
| Gyatt | Derivative of the exclamation "Goddamn." Originally an exclamation of awe when seeing an attractive person; contextually expanded to express intense emotion, excitement, approval, or disbelief. |
| Goad | Literal animal (goat) or misspelling of GOAT. Acronym for "Greatest Of All Time," used to describe someone or something as the absolute best in a specific domain. |

Slang is utilized to create humor and reinforce the intended message. Among Generation Alpha, the use of slang serves as a means of expressing both individual and group identity. By adopting popular slang terms,Generation Alpha asserts their membership in a digital community that understands evolving social media trends, particularly on TikTok. Furthermore, slang plays a pivotal role in fostering group solidarity, enabling users to feel a stronger sense of connection through a shared linguistic code. Beyond building solidarity, slang offers a powerful medium for self-expression, allowing Generation Alpha to communicate their emotions,personality, and creativity in a free and unique manner.

The slang currently employed by Generation Alpha to communicate on social media, especially TikTok, reflects the social values and norms characteristic of this generation. Born and raised in a rapidly advancing digital environment, Generation Alpha demonstrates a strong openness to linguistic innovation, such as modifying existing vocabulary and coining new terms relevant to their lived experiences.

However, the impact of slang extends beyond intra-generational communication to affect cross-generational interactions. For older generations, the slang developed and used by Generation Alpha can be difficult to comprehend or may even be perceived as disruptive to traditional communication standards. Consequently,this dynamic can lead to communication gaps and negative perceptions, where Generation Alpha is viewed as lacking respect for conventional linguistic structures. Conversely, for Generation Alpha, using slang is a vital tool for establishing identity in the digital era, portraying them as adaptive, progressive, and creative. This phenomenon shapes contrasting public perceptions: while some view it as a sign of creativity and innovation,others see it as a challenge to formal communication standards.

## DISCUSSION

This generation, born after 2010, has grown up amid rapid digital technology advancements, using TikTok not only for entertainment but also as a primary medium for self-expression and social connection. Within this context, slang functions to establish group identity and strengthen interpersonal bonds among users. TikTok's trend-driven algorithm facilitates the rapid spread of new vocabulary, while features such as hashtags and video challenges draw users into collective digital dialogues. Consequently, TikTok reflects the unique cultural dynamics of the digital age.

The use of slang by Generation Alpha in social interactions on TikTok serves as a tool to cultivate a strong collective identity. Key terms such as *"sigma"* (signifying dominant leadership), *"skibidi"* (referring to something bad or low quality), *"rizz"* (short for charisma, denoting charm), and *"goad"* (GOAT; Greatest of All Time) illustrate how specific words capture shared social meanings. Another primary function of slang is creative self-expression, allowing users to showcase their emotions, personality, and creativity in distinct ways.

Through direct observation of TikTok videos and comment sections, the researchers captured the active use of slang within natural social interactions. These terms not only generate humor but also enable freer, more personalized self-expression. Using popular slang reinforces Generation Alpha's sense of belonging to a digital community that understands current social media trends. Furthermore, slang fosters group solidarity, as shared vocabulary creates a sense of closeness among users.

However, the adoption of slang carries both positive and negative implications. On one hand, slang enables Generation Alpha to assert their identity in the digital era and drives linguistic innovation through word modification and neologism. On the other hand, it creates a communication gap with older generations who often struggle to understand these terms, sometimes leading to the perception that Generation Alpha lacks respect for formal language structures. TikTok accelerates this shift through algorithms that promote trend-based content and peer collaboration. Ultimately, these slang patterns reflect Generation Alpha's rapid adaptation to technology while simultaneously challenging conventional communication norms highlighting how social media reshapes language evolution and youth identity today.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that slang plays a vital role in Generation Alpha's social interactions on the TikTok application. Born after 2010, this generation adopts informal language as a tool to express themselves, build group identity, and forge social connections in the digital era. Through terms such as *"sigma," "rizz,"* and *"skibidi,"* Generation Alpha exhibits high linguistic adaptability and openness to innovation. This shared vocabulary strengthens social bonds and fosters a sense of community within digital spaces.

Nevertheless, the widespread use of slang presents intergenerational communication challenges. Older generations frequently find these terms difficult to decipher, which can cultivate negative perceptions regarding Generation Alpha's adherence to formal language standards. TikTok acts as a primary catalyst for slang dissemination through features like hashtags and video challenges that amplify viral trends.

This linguistic transformation highlights the speed at which Generation Alpha adapts to digital communication modes and underscores social media's profound influence on youth identity formation. Ultimately, this research provides insights into how digital platforms reshape modern communication, offering a foundation for understanding future sociological and linguistic shifts.

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