

# Intergenerational Transformation of Slang Language in Digital Communication

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article History:</b> Received : 18 November Revised : 10 Desember Accepted : 19 Desember</p> <hr/> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Slang, Transformation, Intergenerational, Digital Communication</p>	<p><i>Intergenerational slang is an interesting phenomenon to study. This study aims to analyze the changes and developments in slang that occur between generations, especially in the context of digital communication. Through literature studies and qualitative data analysis, this study identifies the structure, function, meaning, and context of intergenerational slang use. In addition, factors that influence the transformation of slang, such as technological developments, the influence of popular culture, and social dynamics. Boomer, Z, and Alpha generations have unique slang characteristics. Boomers tend to use simpler slang that is rooted in everyday language. The terms they use are often related to life experiences and traditional values. Unlike the Boomer generation, generations Z and Alpha are more creative and experimental in creating slang. The influence of pop culture, social media, and digital technology is very pronounced in the slang they use.</i></p> <p><i>This is an open access article under the <a href="#">CC BY-SA</a> license.</i></p>
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language as a dynamic communication system continues to evolve along with the times and socio-cultural changes in the community of its users (Nisa, 2023). One interesting phenomenon in the development of language is the emergence of slang or colloquial language. Slang is a variation of informal language that is commonly used by certain social groups, often associated with the younger generation. Slang not only functions as a means of internal communication within a group, but also as a marker of identity and self-expression.

The development of digital technology, especially the internet and social media, has had a significant impact on the way people communicate, including in the use and distribution of slang. Digital platforms provide a broad and cross-border interaction space, enabling intensive exchange of information and culture between generations (Nisa, 2021). This gives rise to an interesting phenomenon related to the transformation of slang, both the form, meaning, and function of slang can change and adapt according to the digital context.

In the intergenerational context, the use of slang becomes increasingly complex and interesting to study. Each generation from Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964), Generation Z (born between 1997-2012), to Generation Alpha (born after 2012) has different socio-historical characteristics and experiences, which influence the way they speak, including in the formation and use of slang. Baby Boomers, for example, grew up in the World War II era with the influence of mass media that was still limited so that the slang they use tends to be different from the generation born in the digital era. Meanwhile, Generation Z and Alpha grew up in the digital era with abundant access to information and technology so that their slang is heavily influenced by the internet, social media, and global popular culture.

There has been a lot of research on slang, highlighting various aspects such as word formation, meaning, social function, and its relationship to identity. Tankosić (2022) examines translingual identity as part of the trans-paradigm, referring to negotiable linguistic, sociocultural, ethno-racial, and religious practices. Anhar (2024) has examined the influence of TikTok on language development among Generation Alpha. The findings revealed that TikTok contributed to the emergence of neologisms and slang terms such as "rizz", "brainrot", and "sigma", which quickly spread among Generation Alpha. Dewi (2024) also examined the use of variations of "slang language" on the TikTok platform for Generation Z: a sociolinguistic study. Variations of slang with data in the form of abbreviations are most widely used by Generation Z because they are more practical and easy to apply and memorize. However, from several previous studies, studies that specifically compare the transformation of slang between generations in the context of digital communication are still relatively limited, especially explicitly comparing the Boomer, Generation Z, and Generation Alpha generations. Differences in generational characteristics, technology usage patterns, and digital platform preferences of each generation are thought to contribute to differences in the use and understanding of slang.

Generational differences in language use, including slang, can affect the effectiveness of intergenerational communication. Misunderstandings or different interpretations of slang can trigger miscommunication and even conflict. Therefore, a deep understanding of the transformation of intergenerational slang in digital communication is important to bridge the communication gap and improve harmonious interactions between generations. This study aims to analyze the transformation of slang between generations (Boomer, Z, and Alpha) in the context of digital communication. This study will examine the differences in structure, function, and meaning of slang used by each generation, as well as how digital interaction influences the evolution of slang. Thus, this study is expected to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of language dynamics in the digital era and its implications for intergenerational communication.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to analyze the transformation of slang between generations (Boomer, Z, and Alpha) in the context of digital communication. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to deeply understand the complex phenomenon of slang transformation, including its meaning, function, and context of use in digital interactions. The data for this study are in the form of utterances or texts containing slang commonly used by the three generations (Boomer, Z, and Alpha). The observation method used in this study with listening and note-taking techniques.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This finding was obtained through data analysis collected from platform X which is commonly used by all three generations (Boomer, Z, and Alpha). Data analysis was conducted using content analysis and discourse analysis techniques, which allow identifying the structure, function, meaning, and context of intergenerational slang usage.

Table 1 Data on Differences in Slang Language Between Generations

No	Indonesian	Slang Language		
		Boomer Generation	Generation Z	Generation Alpha
1.	Unclean	Najong	Iuuhhh	Skibidi
2.	Geeky	Cupu	Loser	Ohio
3.	Pretend	Yes, of course	Starboy/Stargirl	Mewing
4.	Darling (greeting)	Darling	Bubub	Pookie
5.	Bad	Dad	Maghrib	Negative Aura
6.	Charm / Attraction	Charisma	Vibes	Rizz
7.	Steal	Klepto	Thief	Fanum Tax
8.	Gossiping	Backbiting	Gossip	Tea
9.	Bad	cement	Noob	Beta

## Data 1 UNCLEAN

### 1. "Najong" (Boomer Generation)

The word "najong," commonly used by the Boomer Generation, is rooted in the word "najis" and has undergone morphological and phonological changes that give it an informal and expressive feel. Its function is primarily expressive, social, and emotive, used to convey disgust or rejection in informal and spoken conversations. Its meaning overlaps with the basic meaning of "najis," but also has connotations of dislike for things that are considered bad. Over time, the use of "najong" tends to decrease and has a nostalgic feel.

### 2. "Iuuhhh" (Generation Z)

Unlike "najong," the word "iuuhhh" popular among Generation Z is an onomatopoeia that does not have a clear root word. Its structure is characterized by intensification through the addition of the letter "h" or the repetition of vowels. Its functions are more diverse, including expressions of dislike, online interactions, and even humor. Its meaning is purely connotative, covering a wide spectrum of dislike, from disgust to feeling strange. "Iuuhhh" is very common on social media and instant messaging applications, reflecting a strong digital context. Its nature is adaptive and contextual, and it can be used in various informal situations.

### 3. "Skibidi" (Generation Alpha)

Meanwhile, "skibidi" which is identical to Generation Alpha is a nonsense word derived from music and video. Its structure is simple, a combination of catchy sounds. Its function has shifted from merely expressing negative emotions to expressing joy, generation identity, and part of digital entertainment. Its meaning is entirely connotative, related to pleasure and popular trends. The context of its use is very close to short video platforms and digital entertainment content.

## DATA 2 GENIUS

### 1. "Cupu" (Boomer Generation)

The term "cupu" in the Boomer generation generally refers to someone who is out of date, unfashionable, or unattractive. Structurally, this word is a simple single word. Its function is as a predicate or description to describe someone. The denotative meaning is "out of date", while the connotative meaning is a negative assessment of someone who is considered not to follow trends or developments of the times. The context of its use is usually informal, among peers or in everyday conversation.

### 2. "Loser" (Generation Z)

"Loser" is an adaptation of English that is popular among generation Z. Structurally, this word is also simple and functions as a predicate or description. Its denotative meaning is literally "loser", but in the context of everyday use, it is often used more lightly to describe someone who makes a mistake, fails, or is considered less cool. The context of its use is very broad, ranging from online conversations to face-to-face, and is often used with a joking or sarcasm tone.

### 3. "Ohio" (Generation Alpha)

The use of "Ohio" as slang by Generation Alpha is a unique phenomenon. Structurally, this word is the name of a state in the United States. However, in this context, the word has shifted its meaning and functions as a label for something that is considered strange, unique, or unusual. Its connotative meaning is neutral, not always negative or positive. The context of its use is often related to online trends and social media, where users create content that is considered "Ohio" to attract attention.

## DATA 3 PRETEND

### 1. "Sok Iye" (Boomer Generation)

The phrase "sok iye" is a typical example of Boomer generation slang that combines two words: "sok" which means "pretend" or "know-it-all" and "iye" which is the informal form of "iya". Structurally, this phrase is simple and functions as a predicate or description to describe the attitude of someone who is considered arrogant or likes to pretend. The denotative meaning is "pretending to be more than what is

actually", while the connotative meaning is a negative assessment of an attitude that is considered arrogant or belittling others. The context of its use is very informal, usually in everyday conversation among peers to express disapproval or annoyance with someone's attitude.

## 2. "Starboy/Stargirl" (Generation Z)

The terms "starboy" and "stargirl" are adaptations of popular song lyrics and have become part of Generation Z's slang vocabulary. Structurally, these two words are compound words that combine the words "star" with "boy" or "girl". Their function is as predicates or descriptions to describe someone who is considered cool, popular, or has an interesting lifestyle. The denotative meaning is "a star", while the connotative meaning is a positive assessment of someone who is considered special or admired. The context of its use is very broad, ranging from online conversations to face-to-face, and is often used with a tone of admiration or envy.

## 3. "Mewing" (Generation Alpha)

"Mewing" is a unique phenomenon that emerged among the Alpha generation. This term refers to the practice of pressing the tongue to the roof of the mouth with the aim of changing the shape of the face to be considered more attractive. Structurally, "mewing" is a verb derived from the sound produced when performing the action. Its function is as a verb to describe physical actions. Its denotative meaning is "pressing the tongue to the roof of the mouth", while its connotative meaning is related to efforts to improve physical appearance. The context of its use is mainly found on social media platforms and online communities that discuss beauty and health.

### DATA 4 DEAR (Greeting)

#### 1. "Darling" (Boomer Generation)

The term "darling" is an English loanword that is popular among the Boomer generation, especially in more formal or romantic conversational contexts. Structurally, this word is simple and functions as a greeting or term of endearment. Its denotative meaning is "dear" or "sweetheart", while its connotative meaning indicates emotional closeness or a more intimate relationship. The context of its use is often in personal or formal situations, such as in conversations between couples or in polite greetings to younger people.

#### 2. "Bubub" (Generation Z)

"Bubub" is an example of a unique slang among Generation Z. Structurally, this word is onomatopoeic, which is a word formed based on the sounds it imitates. Its functions are diverse, it can be an expression of joy, surprise, or even a form of subtle rejection. Its denotative meaning is difficult to define precisely because it is contextual, but in general it refers to intense emotions. The context of its use is very informal, usually in online conversations or short messages, and is often accompanied by emojis or gifs to strengthen the meaning.

#### 3. "Pookie" (Generation Alpha)

"Pookie" is a term that is increasingly popular among Generation Alpha, especially in the context of a term of endearment or a term for a pet. Structurally, this word is simple and functions as a greeting or term of endearment. Its denotative meaning is "dear" or "darling", while its connotative meaning indicates gentle and tender affection. The context of its use is very broad, ranging from calls between peers to calls to pets.

### BAD DATA 5

#### 1. "Fathers" (Bomber Generation)

The term "bapuk" is a typical Boomer slang that is often used to describe something that is broken, old, or not functioning properly. Structurally, this word is simple and functions as an adjective or predicate. Its denotative meaning is "broken" or "old", while its connotative meaning carries a negative nuance, indicating dissatisfaction or disappointment with an object or situation. The context of its use is very informal, usually in everyday conversation to express displeasure with an item or situation.

## 2. "Maghrib" (Generation Z)

The use of "magrib" as a slang by generation Z is an interesting phenomenon. Structurally, this word refers to the time after sunset in Arabic. However, in the context of slang, "magrib" is often used as a metaphor to describe something that is outdated, irrelevant, or uninteresting. Its connotative meaning is a negative assessment of something that is considered old-fashioned or not in accordance with current trends. The context of its use is very broad, ranging from online conversations to face-to-face, and is often used with a tone of sarcasm or sarcasm.

## 3. "Negative Aura" (Generation Alpha)

The phrase "negative aura" is an adaptation of English that is popular among Generation Alpha, especially in the context of spiritual or mystical beliefs. Structurally, this phrase consists of the adjective "negative" and the noun "aura". Its function is as a predicate or description to describe someone or something that is considered to have negative energy or bring bad influence. The denotative meaning is "negative aura", while the connotative meaning is related to beliefs about energy and its influence on human life. The context of its use is often found in online conversations, especially on social media platforms, and is related to topics such as spirituality, astrology, and energy.

# DATA 6 CHARM/ATTRACTION

## 1. "Charisma" (Boomer Generation)

The word "charisma" is an adoption from Greek that has long been adopted in Indonesian. Structurally, this word is simple and functions as a noun. Its denotative meaning refers to a strong personal attraction, charming personality, or a person's ability to influence others. In the context of the Boomer generation, "charisma" is often associated with charismatic leaders or public figures who have the ability to persuade and inspire the masses. The context of its use is quite formal and is often used in the context of discussions about leadership, politics, or famous figures.

## 2. "Vibes" (Generation Z)

"Vibes" is an adaptation of English that is popular among Generation Z. Structurally, this word is a noun that does not have an exact equivalent in Indonesian. Its denotative meaning is literally "vibration", but in the context of everyday use, "vibes" refers to the mood, energy, or atmosphere felt by someone in a particular place or situation. "Vibes" can also refer to the first impression someone gets of another person. The context of its use is very informal, usually in everyday conversation, especially on social media, to describe a vague but intense feeling or mood.

## 3. "Rizz" (Generation Alpha)

"Rizz" is a relatively new term that is very popular among Generation Alpha. This word is an informal abbreviation of "charisma" and functions as a noun. Its denotative meaning is almost the same as "charisma", which is a strong personal attraction. However, in the context of Generation Alpha, "rizz" refers more specifically to a person's ability to attract the opposite sex or make others interested in him. The context of its use is very informal, usually in online conversations, especially on social media platforms, and is often related to topics such as romantic relationships and popularity.

# DATA 7 STEALING

## 1. "Klepto" (Boomer Generation)

The term "klepto" is an adaptation of the English word "kleptomaniac" which means thief. In the context of the Boomer generation, "klepto" is often used informally to refer to someone who likes to take other people's belongings without permission, even on a small scale. Structurally, "klepto" functions as a noun and is used as a predicate or description. Its denotative meaning is "thief", while its connotative meaning carries a negative connotation and is often associated with a person's bad character. The context of its use is usually informal, in everyday conversation to describe the behavior of someone who is considered dishonest.

## 2. "Thief" (Generation Z)

"Maling" is a very common Indonesian word and is not limited to a particular generation. However, in the context of generation Z, this word is often used in a broader context, not only referring to the act of

physically stealing, but can also be used metaphorically to describe the act of taking something that is not supposed to be, such as someone else's idea or attention. Structurally, "maling" functions as a noun and is used as a predicate or description. Its denotative meaning is "thief", while its connotative meaning can vary depending on the context of its use.

### 3. "Fanum Tax" (Generation Alpha)

"Fanum Tax" is a relatively new and unique slang term for Generation Alpha. This term is a combination of the name of an American broadcaster, Fanum, and the word "tax" which means tax. "Fanum Tax" is used to describe the act of taking food or drinks from friends or other people secretly without permission. Structurally, "Fanum Tax" functions as a noun and is used as a predicate or description. Its denotative meaning is "Fanum tax", which indirectly refers to the act of taking food secretly. Its connotative meaning is lighter than "klepto" or "thief" and is often used in the context of friendship or online communities as a form of humor or joke. The context of its use is very specific, especially among teenagers who follow internet trends and culture.

## DATA 8 GOSPELING

### 1. "Gossip" (Boomer Generation)

The term "backbiting" comes from Arabic and has a very strong connotation in Islamic culture. Structurally, "backbiting" is a noun that refers to the act of talking about others behind their backs with the aim of bringing them down or degrading them. Its denotative meaning is very clear, namely "talking about the bad things about others". The context of its use is very specific, related to ethics and morality in Islam. In the context of the Boomer generation, "backbiting" is often associated with religious prohibitions and is considered a sin.

### 2. "Gossip" (Generation Z)

"Gosip" is an Indonesian word that is very commonly used and is not limited to a particular generation. However, in the context of generation Z, the word "gosip" is often associated with the activity of sharing information or rumors, whether true or not, about other people's personal lives, especially through social media. Structurally, "gosip" functions as a noun. Its denotative meaning is "information that is not necessarily true about other people's personal lives". The context of its use is very broad, ranging from everyday conversation to online activities

### 3. "Tea" (Generation Alpha)

"Tea" is an adaptation of English that is popular among Generation Alpha, especially in the context of internet culture. The word "tea" in this context is used as a metaphor to refer to gossip or interesting or surprising information about other people's lives. Structurally, "tea" functions as a noun. Its denotative meaning is "teh", but in the context of slang, "tea" means "gossip". The context of its use is very specific, especially on social media platforms, and is often used in the form of expressions such as "spill the tea" (sharing gossip) or "tea is hot" (the gossip is interesting).

## DATA 9 BAYAH

### 1. "Cemen" (Boomer Generation)

The term "cemen" is an adjective in Indonesian that is often used to describe someone who is fearful, cowardly, or does not dare to face challenges. In the context of the Boomer generation, "cemen" is often used as a negative assessment of someone who is considered weak or has no courage. Structurally, "cemen" functions as a predicate or description to modify a noun. Its denotative meaning is "cowardly", while its connotative meaning carries a negative nuance and is often associated with cowardice or lack of courage. The context of its use is very broad, ranging from everyday conversation to proverbs or proverbs.

### 2. "Noob" (Generation Z)

"Noob" is an adaptation of the English word "newbie" which means a beginner or someone who is just learning something. However, in the context of generation Z, especially in the world of online games, "noob" is often used as a term of sarcasm to describe players who are less skilled or often make mistakes. Structurally, "noob" functions as a noun. Its denotative meaning is "beginner", while its connotative

meaning carries a negative nuance, namely someone who is considered incompetent or troublesome. The context of its use is very specific, namely in the world of online games and communities related to games.

### 3. "Beta" (Generation Alpha)

"Beta" in the context of Generation Alpha has several different meanings depending on the context in which it is used. In the tech world, "beta" refers to an early version of a product or software that is still in the testing phase. However, in the context of Generation Alpha slang, "beta" is often used to describe someone who is insecure, unpopular, or unattractive. Structurally, "beta" functions as an adjective. Its denotative meaning is literally "beta", but its connotative meaning in this context is "not attractive" or "unpopular". The context in which it is used is very informal, usually in online conversations or text messages, and is often related to topics such as relationships and popularity.

## FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE

The development of slang is a reflection of the ever-changing social and cultural dynamics. Factors such as changes in social values, lifestyle trends, and technological advances play a major role in giving birth to new terms that are unique and distinctive to each generation. The emergence of the internet and social media, for example, has opened up a very wide space for the younger generation to interact, share ideas, and create a distinctive language. In addition, the influence of popular culture such as music, films, and public figures also influences the development of slang. Terms that come from songs, films, or idols often become trends and are adopted by many people. Thus, slang is not just words, but also a social phenomenon that reflects the identity and characteristics of a particular generation.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Slang, as an integral part of everyday life, has undergone significant evolution from generation to generation. The slang terms that emerge and develop over time are not just words, but also reflect the values, attitudes, and trends adopted by each generation.

Boomer, Z, and Alpha generations have unique slang characteristics. Boomers tend to use simpler slang that is rooted in everyday language. The terms they use are often related to life experiences and traditional values. Unlike Boomers, Z and Alpha generations are more creative and experimental in creating slang. The influence of pop culture, social media, and digital technology is very pronounced in the slang they use. New terms emerge quickly and are often specific, reflecting their interest in the digital world and online interactions.

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