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| **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

The Influence of Mass Media and Social Networks on the Spread of Slang

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| **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the influence of mass media and social networks on the proliferation of youth slang. The theoretical framework integrates Rogers' (2003) diffusion of innovations theory and Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. Rogers' theory elucidates how an innovation, such as youth slang, diffuses through a social system, shaped by factors like relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. Bandura's theory explains how individuals acquire and adopt new behaviors through observation and imitation, emphasizing the role of environmental and social factors. Employing a qualitative approach, data will be collected from television programs, films, and social media platforms where youth slang is prevalent. NVivo 14 qualitative data analysis software will analyze the collected data to identify patterns, themes, and underlying mechanisms driving slang diffusion. The findings aim to provide insights into how mass media and social networks facilitate the spread of youth slang through observational learning, social influence, and the diffusion of linguistic innovations. By integrating th ese theoretical perspectives, the study seeks to contribute to the understanding of slang propagation dynamics in the digital era, informing efforts to address language evolution and promote effective intergenerational communication. An evaluation of the research process and potential solutions for mitigating negative impacts will be included.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the current digital era, social media and mainstream media have permeated every aspect of our daily lives. They function as effective venues for social interaction, entertainment, and communication. Slang is one language trend that has been more popular recently, especially among young people. Slang has thrived in mass media and social networks, where it is often defined by informal, nontraditional, and dynamic phrases.

Bucholtz (2011: 45) posits that the influence of mass media and social networks on language use, particularly slang, cannot be understated. Television shows, movies, and music have long been recognized as influential forces in shaping popular culture and language trends. Social media platforms, with their vast reach and participatory nature, have further amplified the spread and adoption of slang expressions (Tagliamonte, 2016). These platforms allow for rapid dissemination and social reinforcement of slang, facilitating its integration into the linguistic repertoire of diverse communities.

The primary goal of this study is to investigate how mass media and social networks influence the proliferation of youth slang. Specifically, it aims to unravel the mechanisms and dynamics through which slang expressions are propagated, adopted, and normalized within peer groups and across broader social networks. Previous research has explored the role of media in shaping language trends (Androutsopoulos, 2000; Cutler, 1999), as well as the impact of social media on language evolution (Grieve et al., 2018; Squires, 2016). However, few studies have explicitly examined the interplay between mass media, social networks, and the diffusion of slang among youth.

This study seeks to fill this gap by employing a qualitative approach, drawing data from television programs, films, and social media platforms where youth slang is prevalent.

The strength of this study lies in its integration of two well-established theoretical frameworks: Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovations theory and Bandura's (1977) Social Learning theory. Combining these perspectives, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how slang, as a linguistic innovation, diffuses through social systems and acquires through observational learning and social influence.

However, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of the qualitative approach, as it may lack the generalizability of quantitative methods. Additionally, the dynamic nature of slang and its rapid evolution pose challenges in capturing and analyzing its diffusion in real-time. Future research could explore the potential integration of computational linguistic techniques and social network analysis to quantify and model slang diffusion patterns across various online and offline networks. Additionally, investigating the role of influencers, opinion leaders, and content creators in shaping slang adoption could provide valuable insights into the social dynamics underlying language change.

2. LITERATURE REVIEWS

2.1. TRENDS OF SLANG USES

The rise of mass media and social networks has inexorably intertwined with the proliferation of slang, a quintessential marker of youth culture and linguistic innovation. These powerful communication channels have emerged as catalysts for the dissemination and amplification of informal, nontraditional language expressions. Slang, with its vibrant metaphors, neologisms, and unconventional grammar, has found a fertile breeding ground within the realms of television, movies, music, and online platforms. Bucholtz (2011:45) asserts that television shows, movies, and music have long been recognized as influential forces in shaping popular culture and language trends. This phenomenon underscores the profound impact of media on linguistic evolution, particularly within the dynamic realm of youth vernacular.

The emergence of social media has expedited the proliferation of colloquialisms by generating an online environment that facilitates the quick diffusion and social validation of linguistic changes. Social media platforms, with their vast reach and participatory nature, have further amplified the spread and adoption of slang expressions, as Tagliamonte (2016) rightly notes. These platforms allow slang to easily cross language and cultural barriers, becoming part of many societies' verbal repertoires. Social media content's interactive features and viral potential allow slang terms to spread rapidly, encapsulating the spirit of young culture and creating a sense of community among its users. Furthermore, Androutsopoulos (2000) emphasizes how slang words and nonstandard spellings in media texts—like fanzines—contribute to the spread of young language norms.

Two seminal theories—Bandura' (1977) social learning theory and Rogers' (2003) diffusion of innovations theory—help explain the ubiquitous impact of social media and mainstream media on the spread of slang. The former describes how an invention, such as slang, spreads across a social structure, influenced by variables including compatibility, observability, and relative benefit. Meanwhile, Bandura's theory describes how people learn new behaviors—including language norms—by paying attention to and imitating the people in their social environments. Cutler's (1999) research on white teenagers' use of African American English serves as another example of how young people acquire slang through social learning and exposure. Combining these theoretical frameworks sheds light on the processes through which slang terms propagate, gain reinforcement, and ultimately gain acceptance in peer groups and larger social networks.

While the proliferation of slang via mass media and social networks fosters linguistic creativity and cultural expression, it also raises concerns about potential barriers to effective communication across generations and societal segments. As Squires (2016) notes, social media platforms have given rise to new speech codes and language norms that may exacerbate intergenerational divides. As the source document aptly notes, an evaluation of the research process and potential solutions for mitigating negative impacts will be included. Addressing these challenges may involve promoting linguistic awareness, fostering intergenerational dialogue, and encouraging the judicious use of slang in appropriate contexts. Ultimately, understanding the interplay between media, social networks, and slang diffusion can inform efforts to bridge linguistic divides and foster effective communication in an increasingly interconnected world.

2.2. DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS THEORY

Rogers' (2003) diffusion of innovations theory provides a thorough framework for comprehending the method by which novel concepts, methods, or goods—innovations—proliferate over time inside a social system. The idea fundamentally explains the various routes through which members of a social system share innovations. This theoretical framework provides significant insights into the factors that influence the adoption and spread of innovations, such as the use of slang as a language innovation.

Rogers states that five key characteristics primarily determine an innovation's acceptance rate: *trialability*, *observability*, *complexity*, *compatibility*, and *relative advantage*. Relative advantage refers to the perceived superiority of an invention over the practice or concept it

replaces. Compatibility refers to how well an invention aligns with the requirements, prior experiences, and values of potential users. Trialability is the capacity to test an invention in a small setting before completely embracing it, whereas complexity is the perceived difficulty of comprehending and utilizing an innovation. Lastly, observability refers to how easily others can see the advantages or outcomes of an invention.

This theory divides the innovation-decision process into five stages: *knowledge*, *persuasion*, *choice*, *implementation*, and *confirmation*. In addition, it classifies adopters into five groups according to how inventive they are: laggards, innovators, early adopters, early majority, and late majority. These stages and adopter classifications show the mechanics of how innovations, like slang terms, spread throughout a social system. Several facets of the Diffusion of Innovations Theory are especially pertinent when examining how social media and the media as a whole impact the dissemination of teenage slang. These include examining the perceived benefits (relative benefits) of youth adopting slang, assessing how well slang aligns with their values and communication needs, monitoring the frequency and visibility of slang usage in media content and on social media platforms, determining how these platforms contribute to the spread of slang, and identifying the adopter categories within the youth demographic that influence the spread of slang.

Table 1. Diffusion of innovations theory to slang analysis

Aspect	Application
Relative advantage	Examining the perceived benefits of adopting slang expressions among youth, such as fostering group identity, cultural expression, or linguistic creativity.
Compatibility	Assessing the compatibility of slang with the values, experiences, and communication needs of young people within their social circles.
Observability	Analyzing the visibility and prevalence of slang usage in media content, social media platforms, and peer interactions, influencing its adoption.
Communication channels	Investigating the role of mass media and social networks as communication channels facilitating the diffusion of slang expressions.
Adopter categories	Identifying the different adopter categories (e.g., innovators, early adopters) within the youth demographic and their influence on slang propagation.

2.3. SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Albert Bandura's groundbreaking Social Learning Theory provides a convincing framework for comprehending how slang spreads among young people via social media and mainstream media. Fundamentally, this idea suggests that people pick up new behaviors—including language patterns—by watching and imitating the actions of others around them. Giles and Ogay (2007) assert that the ubiquity of mass media and online interactions facilitates young people's acquisition of linguistic patterns through observation and imitation of those around them. The media they watch and the websites they visit continuously expose young people to slang terms, facilitating observational learning.

The idea that people can learn new behaviors just by observing others in action is known as observational learning, and it is one of the main principles behind the social learning theory. Youth are more likely to notice, remember, and eventually replicate slang patterns when they witness their favorite celebrities, influencers, or peers using them in TV series, movies, music videos, or social media postings. The widespread use of slang in popular media material and internet settings normalizes and reinforces slang adoption among young audiences. This phenomenon is known as the power modelling effect. Eckert (2003) says the media provide a constant stream of linguistic models for young people to observe and imitate, shaping their linguistic practices.

Furthermore, the social learning theory highlights the part that motivation and reinforcement play in the learning process. Slang phrases can be used by young people to create a sense of group identification, present a hip or fashionable image, or just to express oneself in a way that appeals to their peers. Positive social reinforcement, such as acceptance, approval, or even adulation from their social circles, reinforces their use of slang and helps to keep them using it. Slang serves as a means for youth to construct and negotiate their identities within their peer groups, and its use is reinforced by social approval and a sense of belonging (Mendoza-Denton, 2008: 112).

Social media platforms' interactive and participatory elements enhance the benefits of social reinforcement and observational learning. In addition to exposing young people to the use of slang, these online environments provide them the chance to actively participate, try new things, and get immediate feedback from their peers. Social media platforms create virtual spaces where young people can explore and showcase their linguistic identities, co-constructing and disseminating linguistic innovations together (Jones, 2015: 37). Social media material spreads quickly and has the potential to become viral, which helps slang terms become more commonplace across a wide range of demographics and cultural contexts.

In the end, social learning theory emphasizes how behavior, contextual variables, and personal factors interact intricately to shape slang adoption and spread. Incorporating this theoretical viewpoint, researchers may learn a great deal about the cognitive, social, and environmental factors behind the dissemination of language innovations among young people in the digital era. Androutsopoulos (2014) points out that understanding the role of observational learning and social reinforcement in the diffusion of linguistic innovations is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of language change in our media-saturated world. In our increasingly linked world, an understanding of these processes may help bridge generational gaps, foster effective communication, and celebrate the dynamic aspect of language growth.

Table 2. Application of social learning theory to slang analysis

Aspect	Application
Observational Learning	Examining the exposure to slang usage through media content, influencers, and peer interactions, facilitating observational learning.
Reciprocal Determinism	Investigating the interplay between personal factors (e.g., age, identity), environmental influences (media, social networks), and slang adoption behavior.
Self-Efficacy	Analyzing the perceived ability of youth to effectively use and embrace slang expressions, influencing their motivation and persistence.
Reinforcement	Exploring the social reinforcement and perceived benefits (e.g., group identity, coolness) that reinforce the use of slang among youth.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. DATA SOURCE

Three primary sources will provide data for this study: TV shows, Movies and films and social media networks. Films and television shows are examples of mainstream media, which has long been acknowledged as a significant factor in influencing language and popular culture, particularly among young people. Through an examination of the slang employed in different contexts, the research may look at how the media as a whole promotes the spread and normalization of certain slang terms.

Conversely, social media platforms offer an online space where colloquialisms may proliferate quickly and get support from peers and social interactions. These platforms facilitate the co-construction and diffusion of linguistic innovations within adolescent communities, as well as the observational learning and imitation of slang usage.

Table 3. The source of data

Source	Description	Quantity
TV	Television programs where youth slang is prevalent	40 programs
FM	Films/movies where youth slang is used	15 films
SM	Social media platforms:	
	- Facebook	100 posts/pages
	- Zalo (Vietnamese app)	100 posts/groups
	- Other platforms (Instagram, TikTok, etc.)	200 posts/accounts

3.2. DATA ANALYSIS

The study will analyze data from television, films, and social media using NVivo 14 qualitative data analysis software. Thematic analysis will identify recurring patterns and themes related to slang propagation. The coding process will use deductive and inductive approaches, examining factors such as relative advantage and social learning, as well as identifying emergent themes and mechanisms.
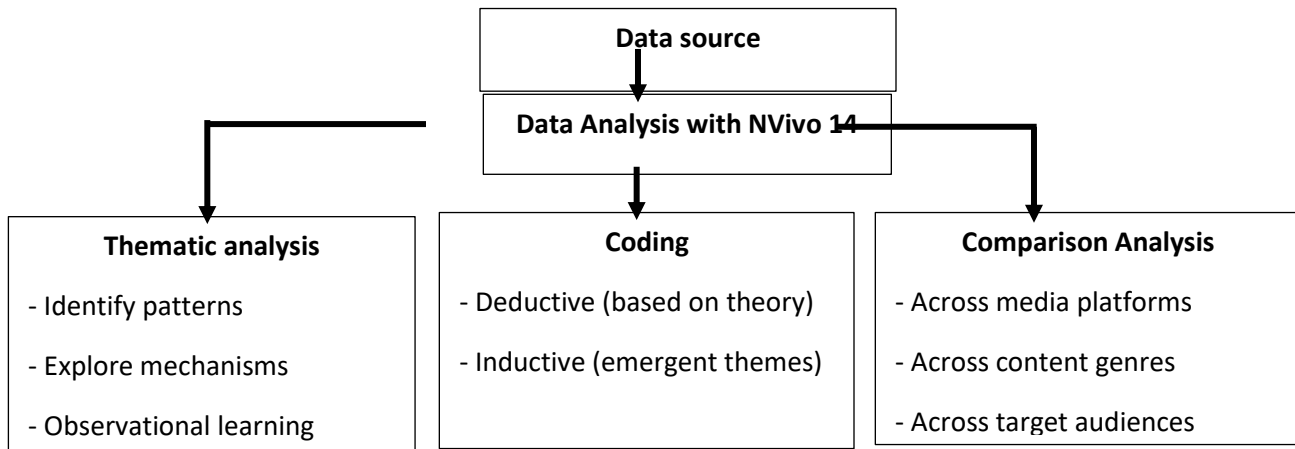
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Thematic analysis	Coding	Comparison Analysis
- Identify patterns	- Deductive (based on theory)	- Across media platforms
- Explore mechanisms	- Inductive (emergent themes)	- Across content genres
- Observational learning		- Across target audiences

Figure. The process of data analysis

4. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

4.1. PATTERNS OF SLANGS

This section is to give a thorough review of the numerous patterns and motivations behind the usage of slang terminology in a variety of media, such as movies, television shows, and social media platforms. Through the classification of slang terms based on four primary goals (forming a group identity, projecting a stylish image, expressing oneself, and demonstrating a rebellious attitude), the research aims to clarify the social contexts and underlying motivations that propel the uptake and spread of these linguistic innovations. Table 4 provides a succinct overview of the many slang terms used in movies, TV shows, and social media. It demonstrates the wide variety of slang terminology that young people use to express themselves, project a trendy or stylish image, promote a feeling of group identity, and display a rebellious or nonconformist attitude, among other goals.

Table 4. Patterns of slangs

Source	Group identity	Fashionable image	Self-expression	Rebellious expression
TV	homies, fam, bruh, squad goals	slay, goals, yasss, turnt	YOLO, I can't even, derp	salty, IDGAF, hrow shade
FM	posse, crew, homeboys	bad, sick, fire, on fleek	vibing, same, mood	thirsty, salty, throwing shade
SM	tribe, gang, fam bam	litt, slaying, fierce, snatched	I'm dead, extra, feels	salty, cancelled, low-key shade

4.1.1. Group identity

Slang phrases frequently act as linguistic indicators of group identification, encouraging a feeling of camaraderie and unity among those within a specific social circle or subculture. By reflecting common experiences, beliefs, and cultural norms, these phrases create a language code that is unique to the in-group and separates it from the out-group.

Words like *homies*, *fam*, and *bruh* (short for brother) frequently refer to close friends or members of one's peer group in TV series, movies, and social media. These terms serve as language indicators of group cohesion because they imply a sense of familiarity and close social ties. Referring to one's close-knit group of friends, the term *squad*, which originates from *squad goals* (an aim for a close-knit buddy group), has become popular. Certain group identity-related slang phrases may have different meanings depending on gender or cultural background. For example, male youth groups could prefer to refer to their group as *posse* to project a manly sense of camaraderie, whereas female social circles would prefer to refer to their group as *tribe* or *gang* (used in a non-violent meaning), reflecting their own social dynamics. Furthermore, in underrepresented or oppressed populations, some slang terms can function as markers of cultural identity. African American and Hispanic adolescent cultures, for instance, have widely used the word *homeboys* to denote a feeling of shared cultural history and experiences, generating a sense of pride and belonging.

Similar trends may be seen in the way that slang is used in the Vietnamese setting to define group identification. Young people frequently use terms like *lũ*, *đám*, or *team* to describe their buddy groups or social circles. The strong sense of camaraderie and solidarity

conveyed by terms like *bạn bè thân thiết* or *anh em* reflects the significance of interpersonal connections and group dynamics in Vietnamese society.

In the end, group identity-related slang phrases are effective language tools that help young people foster a feeling of community, solidarity, and shared experiences among their peers. These phrases act as markers of cultural identity, promoting a sense of pride and a connection to one's heritage, in addition to reflecting the distinctive dynamics and values of various peer groups.

4.1.2. Fashionable image

The desire to come across as fashionable or stylish is another common reason why young people utilize slang. Young people use many slang expressions to project an air of being *hip*, *chic*, or *on-fleek*, a slang phrase for fashionable or on-point. These phrases are language indicators of what young people find appealing or fashionable, and they frequently come from popular culture, including music, fashion, and youth-oriented media.

One well-known example is the slang word *slay*, which expresses respect or approval for someone's appearance or manner. Often used in conjunction with other colloquialisms, such as *slaying the game* or *slay queen*, it characterizes people who are seen to be extraordinarily chic. Similarly, people frequently use *fierce* to describe something or someone that exudes boldness, confidence, and unabashed style. The television and film industries frequently use slang phrases like *bad*, *sick*, and *fire* to characterize something or someone as really amazing or outstanding. For example, a character may say, *Her outfit is fire*! in reference to someone's stylish clothing. On social media platforms, young people often use terms like *litt*, which is short for *literally*, and *snatched*, which is short for *looking attractive or stylish*, to flaunt their sense of style or support the fashionable looks of others.

Projecting a stylish image on social media is critical, as evidenced by the frequent use of visual components like emojis, hashtags, and styled photos alongside this slang terminology. A user may, for instance, share a selfie with the hashtag *slaying* and *snatched* to express confidence in their looks and follow the latest fashion trends. It is important to remember that different cultural settings and gender identities might have varied ways of using slang to create a stylish image. Certain slang phrases may have special meanings or implications pertaining to style and coolness in distinct subcultures. For instance, several metropolitan youth cultures frequently use the word *fresh* to characterize someone's fashionable appearance or wardrobe choices.

Slang phrases meant to project a stylish or fashionable image are also common in Vietnamese youth culture. The phrase *đẹp trai* or *gái phết*, for instance, roughly translates to very good-looking and is frequently used to praise someone's beautiful looks or sense of style. Furthermore, *đẹp chanh sả*—which translates to stunningly beautiful—is a common way to compliment someone on their trendy or stylish appearance.

Therefore, social media and entertainment media are powerful mediums for spreading and normalizing young slang use. Television shows and movies often use trendy catchphrases like *bad*, *sick*, and *fire* to describe something as outstanding or fashionable. Teenagers use slang terms like *litt* and *snatched* on social media to highlight their stylish ensembles, frequently adding emojis, hashtags, and carefully chosen images. Presenting a fashionable image on the internet is essential because it enables young people to identify with current aesthetics and win approval from their peers by using language signals that mirror both prevalent cultural trends and changing subcultural norms.

4.1.3. Self-expression

Young people often use slang as a common tool to express themselves, allowing them to relate and personalize their feelings, attitudes, and experiences in a distinctive way. There are many instances of this language phenomenon in TV series, motion pictures, and social media platforms. YOLO, which stands for *You Only Live Once*, is a widespread slang saying that promotes living in the present and taking advantage of life's possibilities. The media widely uses this expression to convey an easygoing, adventurous vibe. For example, a TV character may exclaim, *YOLO, let's go skydiving*! to convey an adventurous and impulsive mindset.

I can't even is another colloquial statement that expresses feeling overpowered by something or someone. People frequently use it in social media postings or discussions to express annoyance, laughter, or disbelief. Someone may post a meme, for instance, with the comment, *I can't even handle this level of cuteness*, expressing their incapacity to handle the excessively charming material. Another common colloquialism for self-expression is *derp*, which denotes an absurd or foolish deed or phrase. Young people frequently use it in a lighthearted or humorous way, showcasing their sense of humor or admitting to their own moments of foolishness or misunderstanding. A character in a movie would say, *Derp, I totally blanked on their name*, for example, signifying a brief loss of focus or memory.

Slang phrases like *tớ chịu* (literally, I give up) and *tớ hết nói nổi* (basically, I'm speechless) are frequently used to indicate irritation or incredulity in Vietnamese youth culture. In response to an unexpected or daunting circumstance, young people may use these expressions to convey their feelings in a hilarious and sympathetic way. Furthermore, the expression *cảm giác như...*, which translates to *it feels like...*, is frequently employed to provide a more vivid and expressive description of personal experiences or feelings. One way to express delight or enthusiasm is to say *cảm giác như trái tim tớ đang nhảy múa* (roughly, it feels like my heart is dancing).

Teenagers may convey their feelings, attitudes, and life experiences in an accessible and genuine way by using slang terms as linguistic markers for self-expression. TV series, films, and social media widely use these colloquialisms, reflecting the need for self-expression among young cultures. The general idea of using creative and informal language to express one's inner world is universal, even though individual slang expressions may differ between languages and cultures.

4.1.4. Rebellious expression

Young people frequently utilize slang phrases to convey disobedience, revolt, or a nonconformist mindset. A variety of media, including movies, TV series, and social media, showcase this phenomenon of language use. These phrases function as language identifiers that question accepted social mores, make a distinctive statement, and exude a rebellious attitude.

Salty describes someone as angry, bitter, or resentful about anything. People frequently use this phrase to mock or disregard those who express disapproval or criticism in social media postings and comments. For example, a person may leave the remark *Stay salty* on a post that criticizes a certain celebrity or trend, indicating that they are contemptuous of the criticism and will not back down.

Another common colloquialism that expresses a rebellious mindset is *IDGAF*, which stands for *I don't give a fuck*. People commonly use this expression to express a lack of care or disinterest in adhering to social standards or expectations. In film or television, a character may say something like I*DGAF*, what people think to demonstrate their independence and contempt for other people's viewpoints. Additionally becoming more and more common is the expression *throw shade* or *throwing shade*, especially on social media. It describes the act of making a subliminal, disparaging, or impolite remark or gesture toward a person or something. Young people might use this term to subtly and defiantly communicate their dissatisfaction or opposition. A social media user could, for instance, publish a joke or snarky comment to *throw shade* at a celebrity's wardrobe decision.

Slang phrases like *phóng khoáng* (carefree) and *bất cần* (indifferent) are frequently used in the Vietnamese context to denote a rebellious and nonconformist mindset. These statements show a disdain for social norms as well as a yearning for autonomy and personal freedom. Furthermore, it's customary to reject criticism or social conventions with expressions like *kệ đi* (don't care) and *ai quan tâm* (who cares), demonstrating one's independence and defiance.

It is significant to remember that different age groups, genders, and cultural backgrounds might employ rebellious slang in different ways. Certain colloquialisms may be more significant or have particular meanings associated with rebellion or nonconformity in specific subcultures. For example, using profanity or explicit language may be considered a more overt form of rebellion against society's norms and expectations within particular adolescent subcultures.

In conclusion, young people use rebellious slang idioms as linguistic tools to show their uniqueness, question social norms, and project a defiant or nonconformist attitude. A variety of media platforms employ these expressions, reflecting the rebellious and self-expressive essence of young culture. Even though the precise terminology may vary depending on the culture and environment, rebellious slang continues to challenge social conventions and assert one's individuality.

4.2. Mechanisms of slang propagation

Slang spreads among young people due to complex factors involving media impact, social networks, and language innovation dissemination. Combining Bandura's social learning theory with Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory provides a thorough perspective for examining these processes. Table 6 lists the main elements—relative advantage, compatibility, observability, and social reinforcement—that influence the spread of slang from these ideas. Through an analysis of how these components interact in the context of mass media and internet platforms, we may decipher the fundamental processes that propel the widespread adoption of slang terms among youth populations.

Table 6. Mechanisms of slang propagation

Mechanism	Characteristics
Relative Advantage	- Perceive benefits of using slang
	- Fosters group identity
	- Enable cultural expression
	- Promote linguistic creativity
Compatibility	- Align with youth values and communication needs
	- Reflect group culture and lifestyle

Observability	- Prevalent in media
	- Easily observable and imitable
	- Television, movies
Communication Channels	- Social media
	- Channels facilitating slang diffusion

4.2.1. Mechanisms of relative advantage

Young people widely use and diffuse slang terms due to their relative benefits. Young people widely use slang due to its numerous advantages, which contribute to its widespread use on social media and other media platforms.

Slang, first and foremost, promotes a feeling of group identification and belonging. Young individuals are able to create linguistic markers that set their in-group apart from the out-group by utilizing distinctive, informal language. This common code strengthens the feelings of solidarity, fraternity, and social ties within their peer groups. For example, in TV series, movies, and social media, people frequently use phrases like *squad*, *homies*, or *bruh* to refer to close friends or members of their group, expressing a sense of familiarity and togetherness. Slang also promotes language innovation and cultural expression. It gives young people the chance to communicate their viewpoints, ideas, and experiences in a distinctive and real way. It's common for media and internet platforms to utilize phrases like *I can't even* or YOLO (You Only Live Once) to communicate exaggerated emotions or a carefree, adventurous attitude, which reflects the colorful and expressive spirit of young culture.

Slang is essential for promoting self-expression and group identification in the Vietnamese environment. Social ties are important since terms like *lũ*, *đám*, or *team* are often used to refer to one's close-knit buddy group. Furthermore, young Vietnamese people may describe their feelings and experiences in a relevant and innovative way by using terms like *tớ chịu* (I give up) and *cảm giác như* (it feels like). Second, many young people perceive slang as hip and fashionable, aligning well with their desire to appear put-together. Using colloquial expressions such as *slay*, *fire*, or *on fleek*, they may demonstrate their awareness of contemporary culture and stay current with language use patterns. These trendy slang terms have become more visible and influential due in large part to social media platforms, where young people publish images and photographs with these phrases included in the hashtags and descriptions in an attempt to gain validation from their peers.

We can attribute the apparent relative advantage of slang to its widespread usage across many media outlets and social networks. Television series, motion pictures, and well-known users on social media platforms frequently use and popularize slang terms. This makes them more appealing to younger audiences and improves their perceived coolness and trendiness. These methods widely expose and normalize slang, fostering its acceptance and growth as a desirable linguistic innovation. Examining the mechanics of relative advantage reveals that young people perceive slang as beneficial for various purposes, including creating a trendy image, establishing group identity, facilitating cultural expression, and encouraging language originality. These benefits, together with the power of social media and the media at large, greatly aid in the slang's widespread acceptance and proliferation among young people.

4.2.2. Mechanisms of compatibility

Young people widely use slang because it is remarkably compatible with their social dynamics, communication techniques, and cultural standards. The incorporation of slang idioms into young culture is seamless, creating a sense of community and connecting with their common goals and experiences. This compatibility mechanism is essential to the quick spread of slang in social media and the media at large.

The degree to which slang is consistent with the attitudes and values that characterize adolescent culture is a crucial component of compatibility. Young people frequently use slang to express themselves, show their originality, defy language norms, and claim their own identities. Phrases like *keep it real* and *no cap*, which refer to telling the truth, reflect the emphasis on authenticity and realness within young subcultures. Films, TV series, and social media posts frequently feature these phrases, reflecting the need for authentic self-representation among youthful audiences. Moreover, slang also fits in very well with the communication requirements and preferences of young people, who like to use language that is casual, succinct, and expressive. Using phrases like *slay* (to excel or impress), *lit* (exciting or great), or *on fleek* (perfect or on point) helps young people communicate complicated feelings and subtle meanings in a clear and understandable way. Social media and mass media intentionally incorporate these terms to cater to the communication preferences of their younger consumers.

More particularly, cultural and subcultural subtleties also impact the compatibility of slang, as it captures the distinct identities, experiences, and lives of different adolescent groups. For instance, in metropolitan areas, some colloquial expressions may have cultural connotations and function as symbols of unity and shared history. Expressions like *xì tin* (cool or fashionable) and *bủn rủn* (overwhelmed with

emotion) speak to the experiences and communication styles of young people in Vietnam. The fact that slang has gender-specific variants is just another example of how well it fits into adolescent culture. While female social circles may embrace idioms like *sis* or *girl gang*, male peer groups may select more forceful or macho slang terms like *bro code* or *squad goals*, reflecting their own social dynamics and identity building.

In fact, mass media and social networks reinforce the compatibility of slang with young culture. TV series, motion pictures, and well-known social media users purposefully use slang terms that speak to the morals, communication styles, and cultural backgrounds of their younger viewers. This exposure further enhances the acceptance and compatibility of slang among adolescent subcultures, normalizing and confirming its use.

In short, compatibility is one of the main factors contributing to the rapid spread of slang among youth. Mass media and social networks widely adopt and disseminate slang due to its seamless integration with young cultural norms, communication techniques, and subcultural dynamics. These channels strengthen the compatibility of these language developments with the lived experiences and ambitions of young cultures by purposefully inserting slang into their content and platforms. This creates a sense of resonance and belonging.

4.2.3. Mechanisms of observability

One of the main reasons for the widespread use of slang among young people is its observability. Young people may readily observe and mimic the use of slang terms through highly visible outlets such as television shows, movies, and social media platforms. This process plays a significant role in the spread of slang because it legitimizes and encourages the use of certain colloquial language patterns. Social media, in particular, has greatly enhanced the observability of slang. Because these online venues are participatory, users may see celebrities, influencers, and their peers using slang in their captions, comments, and posts in an effortless manner. This continual exposure encourages young people to adopt and experiment with these language innovations themselves, fostering a sense of familiarity and normality.

Using hashtags and hot topics on social media sites such as Twitter and Instagram are one example. When a colloquial term gains popularity as a hashtag (like #lit or #slayqueen), it becomes more noticeable and strengthens its connection to certain situations or meanings. Young users can pick up on the subtleties of this terminology by simply observing others using it and then incorporating it into their own online conversations. Furthermore, slang is more visible due to the extensive sharing and viral nature of memes, videos, and other user-generated material on social media. Funny memes with relevant slang phrases like *I can't even* or *same* may go viral very rapidly, which further solidifies their use and appeal to young audiences.

In terms of mainstream media, such as TV series and films, frequently use slang terms to represent the true language usage patterns of the young people they feature. Popular adolescent sitcoms or dramas frequently include characters who employ expressions like *salty*, *throwing shade*, or *IDGAF*, which serve as clear models for observational learning. Young viewers can easily adopt these linguistic patterns during their own speech. Understanding that slang may vary in observability across different cultural contexts and subcultures is crucial. Social networking sites like Zalo and Facebook, for example, have made it easier for people to observe slang terms that are unique to Vietnamese young culture. Phrases like *bao đẹp* (looking terrific) and *xình xịch* (stylish or fashionable) have become more visible due to their regular usage on these platforms, which facilitates observational learning and imitation.

The impact of social networks and peer groups further amplifies the observability mechanism. It is more common for young people to see and hear slang terms from people they admire, from well-known influencers to close friends. Social endorsement and peer reinforcement facilitate the fast transmission of language innovations within certain social groups.

In conclusion, a major factor in the spread of slang among young people is its visibility in media such as movies, TV shows, and social media platforms. These prominent venues expose young individuals to a variety of slang terms, facilitating observational learning and imitation. Social media's participatory and viral qualities, together with peer networks' impact, intensify the observability mechanism and solidify the slang's acceptance and broad usage in young cultures.

4.2.4. Mechanisms of communication channels

Young people widely use slang terms due to the powerful communication channels provided by social media and mass media. These platforms provide youthful audiences with unparalleled exposure to slang usage, which encourages social impact and observational learning. Widespread appearance in a variety of media venues greatly influences adolescent groups' adoption and normalization of slang phrases.

Film and television are effective mediums for spreading slang. In order to accurately portray the language preferences of their younger target audiences, producers and screenwriters purposefully include modern slang in conversation and storylines. Characters that use current terms like *spilling the tea* (revealing gossip), *low-key* (subtle or understated), or *doing the most* (exaggerating or overreacting) are common in popular adolescent dramas, comedies, and films. Repeated exposure to these linguistic innovations on TV encourages young

viewers to internalize and mimic them, thereby incorporating them into their everyday speech. Furthermore, slang gains credibility and coolness through its portrayal in popular culture, increasing its appeal to teenage audiences. Prominent figures who use popular slang phrases increase the perceived attractiveness and trendiness of utilizing these language markers, which encourages their broad adoption in adolescent subcultures. This is consistent with the social learning theory's power modeling effect, which holds that young individuals are more likely to watch, recall, and imitate the actions of powerful or attractive adults.

In the Vietnamese context, local television shows and films frequently use slang terms that reflect the subtleties and experiences of Vietnamese adolescents. Dialogues often contain phrases such as *quẩy tưng* (party hard) or *đẹp choẹt* (very good-looking), which reflect the social dynamics and language standards of the younger local audiences. This exposure helps spread these slang phrases across Vietnamese young populations by enhancing their observability and attractiveness. Furthermore, social media platforms have increased the importance of communication channels in spreading slang. These interactive and participatory spaces allow young users to quickly spread and co-create language breakthroughs. Memes, hashtags, and viral material using colloquial terms like *canceled* (rejected or dismissed), *snatched* (appearing trendy), and *low-key shade* (subtle criticism) spread quickly on social media. Through active participation and sharing, users may readily notice, adopt, and contribute to the emergence of these language trends.

Social media influencers and content providers introduce and popularize slang terms among younger audiences. Their wide appeal and youthful perception of coolness provide the language innovations they use with legitimacy and appeal. Slang phrases get a lot of awareness and appeal when popular personalities on platforms like TikTok, Instagram, or YouTube use them in their material. This encourages followers and fans to widely adopt these expressions. Crucially, communication channels' processes not only allow slang to proliferate but also to adapt and evolve in many linguistic and cultural situations. Social media platforms enable the cross-pollination of slang terms, enabling individuals from diverse groups to observe, embrace, and modify linguistic innovations from a variety of origins. This dynamic interaction influences both the rich tapestry of linguistic variation and the constantly changing character of slang among young subcultures.

To put it simply, social media and mass media are effective means of communication that increase the observability, attractiveness, and normalcy of slang terms among younger audiences. Through the deliberate portrayal of slang in media such as movies, TV shows, and social media posts, along with the use of celebrity, influencer, and user-generated trends, these platforms enable the extensive distribution and assimilation of linguistic innovations among young populations. This process promotes slang's ongoing evolution and adaptability across language and cultural barriers, in addition to being the primary means of its dissemination.

5. CONCLUSION

This study has investigated how social media and mainstream media have a significant impact on the spread of teenage slang. It has shed light on the mechanics behind young people's adoption of slang through the theoretical lenses of Bandura's social learning theory and Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory. Four major slang usage patterns emerged from the analysis: promoting group identification, portraying a stylish image, allowing for self-expression, and communicating rebelliousness. The study also discovered important propagation mechanisms that explain how language innovations spread through social systems and gain traction through social reinforcement and observational learning. These processes include relative advantage, compatibility, observability, and communication routes.

This research's ability to integrate well-established theoretical frameworks to give a thorough knowledge of slang diffusion dynamics is one of its main strengths. Through an analysis of several media platforms, including social media, television, and movies, the research provides valuable insights into the ways in which slang functions in a variety of communication situations. But restrictions have to be recognized. Although the qualitative method produces complex results, it might not be very generalizable. Furthermore, it can be difficult to record real-time language changes due to the swift growth of slang, which might rapidly make certain findings obsolete.

The results hold significant implications for educators, politicians, and media practitioners who aim to close the gap in communication across generations and utilize the expressive capacity of young language. Subsequent avenues for investigation may include using computational linguistic methods to measure the spread of slang in both online and offline networks. It might also be beneficial to examine how opinion leaders and influencers influence the adoption of slang. Furthermore, cross-cultural comparative research may shed light on the ways in which slang spreading mechanisms appear in various sociolinguistic contexts, advancing our knowledge of the worldwide evolution of youth language in the digital era.

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