ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL

Vol.8. No.3.2025

AN ANALYSIS OF SLANG WORD FORMATION USED ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AMONG PAKISTANI NETIZENS

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Abstract

The present study investigates Pakistani social media users' slang during cyberspace interactions. The study finds out the types of word formation of slang that Pakistani Netizens use. Moreover, the current research has followed the word formation process listed by Mattiello (2008). A total of 168 texts of tweets, posts, comments, and captions have been selected for data analysis out of 300 assembled text data from Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Data was collected through a purposive sampling technique and meticulous observation. Furthermore, the data have been analyzed using the qualitative research method and are displayed in the narration and tabular form. Urdu sentences and slang words have been translated using online dictionaries, Google Translate, and artificial intelligence (AI). Additionally, the present research findings show that slang follows all the formation processes of words given by Mattiello (2008) except elliptic rhyming slang, which is also created through other methods. This study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the world of slang and will provide insights for further exploration and research.

Key Words:

Internet Slang, Virtual communities, word formation, Netizenship, Online Discourse, Informal Language, Colloquial expressions

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential asset for communication and acts as a bridge to develop relationships within society. Bloomfield (1983) elaborates that vocal language's flexibility and dynamism bring constant diversity and variation in language. Language cannot be fixed at any point; it changes because of no direct relationship between sound and experience (p. 16). The use of social media by youth has seen robust growth in recent years. Social networking has become a primary mode of communication for youth, and many people use social media to create a virtual community (Ghazali & Abdullah, 2021). According to Crystal (2004, p. 16), internet language is in a state of continuous transformation. Additionally, he calls the internet language a "written speech' or "write the way people talk" (p. 25). Saputra and Marlina (2019) stated in their study

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
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that most slang words are created, used, and spread by social media users. Moreover, due to its use in large numbers, slang has become the new linguistic form for social networking.

The origin of slang is unidentified, prehistoric, and mirrors the verb and noun sling, which is a Scandinavian root used for language and resembles the sound and meaning of slang. According to Munro (1993), slang words are not found in standard language dictionaries and are considered inappropriate English (p. 8). Moreover, Slang reflects the dynamic nature of any living language, and as a result of its expansion at a faster rate, Slang is found in all languages and literary works (Fasola 2015). Partridge (1950) divides slang into five periods of history, starting from the sixteenth century until the twentieth century (p. 37). In the sixteenth century, specific groups used slang, such as criminals and beggars (p. 43). In the seventeenth century, slang was rich with flowery and allegorical terms, brought to the theatre and used to describe immoral actions. In the eighteenth century, slang was socialized and became part of English lexicography (p. 64). In the nineteenth century, slang words were growing faster, and the first slang dictionary was compiled by lexicographers in 1899 (p. 80). In the twentieth century, slang language was affected by World War I and II; people started using slang in their conversations, and slang became part of daily language due to convenience (p. 109). Due to internet growth, social media users have transformed language by making changes in spelling, grammar, pragmatics, and semantics under the umbrella of internet linguistics (Crystal, 2004, pp. 9-10; Al Kadi & Ahmed, 2018). Slang words that are used among Pakistani netizens on social media platforms have received less attention, and little research has been conducted. The present study focuses on the formation of slang words that are used among Pakistani net-speakers on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. The current research improves students' slang vocabulary and enriches their understanding of slang. It will assist in understanding the variations and evaluation of standard language. This study will assist teachers in teaching the vocabulary of slang and will provide reference material to new researchers about slang language.

1.1 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

1. Explore the kinds of word formation of slang employed on social media platforms among Pakistani netizens.
2. Explore the role of English, Urdu, and other indigenous languages in facilitating slang formation used on social media platforms among Pakistani netizens
3. Explore the role of culture and technology in structuring the slang formation used on social media platforms among Pakistani netizens.

1.2 Research Questions

This research deals with the following research questions:

1. What kinds of word formation of slang are employed on social media platforms among Pakistani netizens?
2. To what extent do English, Urdu, and indigenous languages contribute to the word formation of slang used on social media platforms among Pakistani netizens?
3. How does the creative use of slang word formation reflect cultural and technological patterns among Pakistani netizens?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Language change is a constant phenomenon that varies according to time, social setting, and location (Kawther & Hafsa, 2019). Social interactions, technological advancement, lifestyle improvement, cultural norms, and social context are the factors that help in language change

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
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(Jeresano & Carretero, 2022). Global Language Monitor (GLM, 2021), suggested that 5400 new lexical items are created each year, 14.7 lexicons are coined a day, and every 98 minutes a new word is formed. Holmes (2013) defines language variation as speech features that are shared by different groups and differentiate between them, referring to the language in the context, different accents, different styles, and even different languages (p. 6). Dawson & Phelan (2016) discuss that language differences within the same language are recognized as internal variations, while external variations exist between different languages (p. 682).

According to Hayakawa (1947), slang words aid speakers in the expression of feelings and emotions as poetry does; therefore, he refers to slang as "poetry of everyday life" (pp. 148-149). According to Eble (2004), slang is the vocabulary of young people (the majority of the dwellers of the earth) and expresses their fondness for music, art, clothing, and recreation. Slang words are short-lived, and this trait of slang is known as transitoriness (Munro, 1993, p. 17; Coleman, 2012, p. 14). Agha (2015) says slang is an eccentric variety of language, which is an ideological perspective of prudence, and only users of the slang can understand its meaning (p. 306). Coleman (2012) argues that slang words are the identification mark of a particular group, such as "If you don't understand my slang, you're not in my gang" (p. x). Coleman (2012) says slang language is understood by the insider because of the secret code and unification accord between the members of the group, while outsiders cannot comprehend it (p. x). Moreover, slang used inside the community can arouse strong emotions and feelings of vehemence; on the contrary, when articulated outside the community awakens feelings of hostility and malevolence (p. 3). Additionally, slang users are considered illiterate, old-fashioned, and uncultured (p. ix). Mattiello (2008) considers slang as the restricted language of insignificant and minor groups in society (p. 31). (Allan & Burridge, 2006; Grose et al., 2002) consider slang as a stylistically substandard variety compared to the standard language and the obscene language of the lowest miscreants in the nation. Roth-Gordon (2021) summarizes that the presence of slang will encourage triviality, impoliteness, and disdainful behaviour and will reduce seriousness and professionalism. Eble (1996) considered slang as a vocal irony (p. 65). The Internet is the most crucial tool in the diversity of languages and the development of nonstandard varieties of language. Advancements in the internet and social media reshape the social context, and now slang is no longer confined to speech but rather widely used in written form on social media platforms. Crystal (2004) says in comparison with the conventional definition of slang, internet slang is mostly used by netizens in written form as a written speech (pp. 24-25). Teodorescu & Saharia (2015) enlisted some other terms that are used for internet slang words, netspeak, chat speak, cyber-slang, internet-jargon, cyber-jargon, and social slang. Green (2015) considers that the internet provides shelter to the slang language (p. 297). Winarto (2019) summarizes that internet slang is the most used variety of language on the internet among netizens. Barseghyan (2014) identified some types of internet slang that are created and used by netizens, which are homophones, irregular punctuation, unconventional capitalization, onomatopoeic spelling, keyboard-generated symbols, smileys and emojis, clipping, compounding, leet, and abbreviations.

Slang is used on social media platforms, in music, comics, and movies. By watching movies and listening to music, people try to mimic the dialogues and styles of performers, especially when they use the informal language of slang (Latifah, 2017). Slang language aids in expressing aggression and hatred toward others by humiliating them. Moreover, slang decreases the social distance between unfamiliar people and facilitates conversation to create a comfortable environment. Furthermore, slang facilitates the expression of accurate feelings, either positive or

ISSN E: 2709-8273
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negative, about some particular situation (Allan and Burridge, 2006). Adams (2009) stated that speakers use slang to identify themselves with a specific social group (p. 57). Moreover, he believes that slang is a rebellion against the standard language (pp. 56-57). Partridge (1950) describes that slang brings concreteness to abstract ideas and enriches the language. Slang facilitates escape from clichés to show belongingness and creates picturesque effects. It excludes outsiders and maintains secrecy for the personal convenience of the group members (pp. 6-7).

Saputra and Marlina (2019) suggest that slang expressions are more figurative, lively, ambiguous, and fugacious than ordinary language. Additionally, they describe that slang maintains group relations, differentiates between groups, revolts against the standard language, makes intimate relations, and expresses the speaker's attitude through their lexical choices (p. 330). Charkova (2007) stated that slang cannot be used in formal speech due to the presence of obscene expressions and taboo words. Moreover, to express thoughts and emotions, slang provides empowerment and freedom of speech to the speaker. Slang expresses the thoughts and culture of youth and helps to maintain the secrecy of the group members (p. 370). Zhou & Fan (2013) describe the three social functions of slang language: the pursuit of self-identity, the emotive feelings of the slang users, and achieving politeness. Zhou & Fan (2013) summarise that slang helps speakers express strong emotions and release their emotional stress to free themselves from psychological burdens, such as dream relief. The word formation process adds new words to the language and is studied in morphology (Lieber, 2009, p. 2). Slang words are formed through different processes, such as blending, compounding, clipping, back-formation, conversion, acronyms, derivations, multiple processes, reduplicative, abbreviations, fanciful formations, and reversed forms (Mattiello, 2008, pp. 72-154).

According to Britannica (2023), Twitter originated from the podcasting venture of Odeo by Evan Williams, Biz Stone, and Noah Glass in 2004. Jack Dorsey proposed a blog-like short messaging service (SMS) to contact others and shared his first tweet on March 21, 2006, as *just setting up my twttr*. Glass proposed the name *twttr,* while the complete version of Twitter was disclosed in July 2006. Twitter allows its users to post tweets of 280 characters through an online service.

YouTube is a video-sharing website that was registered by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim, employees of PayPal, in February 2005, and Google bought it for $1.65 billion in 2006. Further, the website is designed with a simple interface, which makes it easier to upload and view the content without any technical skills (Hosch, 2023). Blogger (2023) stated that after Instagram, YouTube is the second most famous social media network and the most trafficked website after Google.

Facebook is an American online social media platform that was founded by Harvard University students Mark Zuckerberg, Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes in 2004. Dixon (2023) stated that Facebook, after many controversies, has changed its name from Facebook to 'Meta'. Moreover, Meta has three billion active users across the globe. Barton & Lee (2013) stated that Facebook users upload status updates with a word limit of 5,000 characters, while the comment section of Facebook posts works as a micro-debate forum (pp. 38-39).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research uses the qualitative method for data analysis according to the questions and objectives of the research. Data has been collected through purposive sampling from three social media platforms: YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook. A total of 300 texts have been collected manually, consisting of tweets, posts, comments, and captions from YouTube, Twitter,

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ISSN P:2709-8265
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and Facebook. A total of 168 texts of tweets, posts, comments, and captions have been selected for data analysis out of 300 assembled text data. In the present research, the data have been collected manually through purposive sampling and cautious observation using Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook as per the needs of the research. Moreover, the data collected from the social media accounts were limited to Pakistani users. Additionally, data collected from Facebook and Twitter were posts, tweets, captions, and comment sections of the Facebook and Twitter accounts, respectively. Data from the YouTube videos that show Pakistani content has been gathered from the comments sections and captions. The tweets, comments, captions, and posts of the specified accounts or videos have been gathered by taking screenshots and making a Microsoft Word file by pasting the selected text that contains the slang words. Data was selected carefully after reading and understanding the context and cultural meaning, and limited to the purposeful requirement of the research. Additionally, irrelevant and spam data were discarded. Collected data is analyzed by using the qualitative research method. To find the formation of internet slang, the research has followed the word formation process listed by Mattiello (2008). The slang words have been translated by using different online dictionaries, Google Translate, and artificial intelligence (AI). In the present research, the data have been displayed in the form of narration and tables to portray a distinct depiction of the selected data.

The current research has followed the ethical considerations of the research. The collected data have been used only for research purposes. The private data of any users has not been disclosed, and the data available in the public domain has been used. To avoid any harm to the users' identities of the users such as names, emails, and account IDs, have been hidden and replaced manually with common terms. The validity and reliability of the present research are determined by the experts in the English language and peer reviews during the sample selection and analysis. The variation of selected data has been considered to enhance the validity of the research. Social media slang has been observed for a long period to get a comprehensive understanding.

4. DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Compound words are formed through the process of combining two or more independent words to form a single word with a distinct meaning (Yule, 2010).

S.1 *Bootlicking tweet*

Example: *Bootlicking*

Morphological rule: *Boot* (n) + *lick* (v) + *ing* (der. suf) → *bootlicking* (n, v)

The word *bootlicking* is a compound word that is formed by the addition of the words *boot* (footwear), *lick* (action of licking), and the suffix *ing*. It has been used to describe the subservience and flattering of a person towards someone with authority.

S.2 *Software updated?*

Example: *software updated*

Morphological rule: *software (n) + update (v) + ed (der. suf) → software updated (adjp)*

The term *software updated* is used as slang to imply a systematic effort to change people's viewpoints and stances by imposing external pressure or coercion.

S.3 *Next Level*

Example: *next level*

Morphological rule: *next (adj) + level (n) → next level (np)*

The term *next level* is used as slang for something that has performed extraordinarily and exceeded the norm.

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S.4 The words *pro (n)* and *tip (n)* are combined to form the compound word *pro tip (np)*. This term is used as an informal expression to refer to an extraordinary piece of advice provided by a professional in a particular field.

S.5 The term *chill karo (vp)* is used in informal settings to advise someone to calm down and not to worry excessively.

S.6 The words *dill (n)* and *toots (v)* combined to form a compound word *dill toots (np)*. It sarcastically refers to heartbreak and profound disappointment in trivial situations.

S.7 The words *screw (n)* and *dheela (adj)* are combined to form a compound slang screw dheela (np). It is used to indicate an eccentric and non-conventional attitude. A person with *screw dheela* will act according to his own choices and may be unfit to societal norms.

S. 8 The term *gullu butt (np)* is formed by the combination of *gullu (n)* and *butt (n)*. Pakistani netizens used it as a slur to indicate a person who is involved in violent and rowdy behaviour.

In abbreviation, new words are created through the initial letters of each word or phrase are frequently used in informal situations and are pronounced as a single word Mattiello (2008).

S.1 Ditching someone isn't cool, btw.

Example: *btw*

Morphological rule: ***B****y (prep)* + ***t****he (def)* + ***w****ay (n)* → *btw*

The term *btw* is an example of a slang abbreviation and is shortened from the phrase *by the way (btw)* used among Pakistani netizens. There are some other slang abbreviations used among Pakistani netizens, including *dm (direct message)*, *lol (laughing out loud)*, *lmao (laughing my ass out), and idk* (*I don't know)*.

An acronym is the formation of new words through the initial letter or sounds from words or phrases, pronounced in word forms, and is mostly presented through the use of capital letters Yule (2010).

S.1 Example: *asap*

Morphological rule: ***a****s (adv)* + ***s****oon (adv)* + ***a****s (adv)* + ***p****ossible (adj)* → *asap*

The acronym *ASAP* is a slang expression that has been formed by taking the first morpheme of each word. Besides, many slang acronyms were used by Pakistani netizens, such as *yolo (you only live once), goat (greatest of all), bae (before anyone else), and IMO (In my opinion*).

Clipped words are formed by the depletion of the initial part of the word, the final part of the word, or both Zapata (2007).

S. 1 Example: *ppl*

Morphological rule: *people (n)* + *clipping (eoe)* → *ppl (n)*

The word *ppl* is formed by detaching all the vowels. Besides, Pakistani netizens used some other clipped slang like *vdo (video), fab (fabulous)*, *plz (please) xprs (express)*, *osm (awesome),* and *rzn (reason)*.

In blending, the beginning (head) of one word is combined with the end (tail) of another word to create a new word with a synonymous meaning (Yule, 2010, pp. 55-56).

S.1 Example: *funky*

morphological rule: *Foul (adj)* + *junky (adj)* → *funky (adj)*

The term *funky (adj)* is a blend that is formed by combining the two different words *foul* (adj) and *junky (adj)*. It denotes something stylish, creative, and unconventional. Slang blends *tharkologistics (n)*, *rom-com (n), rizbar (n)*, *chillax (v), frenemy (n), staycation (n),* and *urenglish (n)* are used among Pakistani netizens.

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Reduplicative is the repetition of some part of the word or the whole word for new word formation Zapata (2007).

S. 1 Example: *looky looky*

Morphological rule: *looky (v) + looky (v) → looky looky (adj)*

Looky looky (adj) is slang reduplicative of the verb look, which is used in informal settings to draw attention, express excitement, or indicate surprise. Slang reduplicatives that are used on social media platforms among Pakistani internet users are *Duffa door, Whoaaa whoaaa whoaaa, mummy daddy, goody goody, shughal mela, and Toba Toba.*

Conversion is a change in the syntactic function of a word without a change in lexicology (Yule, 2010, p. 57).

S.1 Example: *savage*

Morphological rule: *savage (adj) ↔ savage (n)*

The term *savage* is an adjective used to refer to something unconventional, while as a noun used to refer to a wild person. Besides, Pakistani netizens used some other slang conversions such as *swag (adj) ↔ swag (n), crush (n) ↔ crush (v)*, *chill (n) ↔ chill (adj), jugaarh (n) ↔ jugaarh (v), snack (n) ↔ snack (adj) and panga (n) ↔ panga (v).*

Back-formation is a type of word formation in which affixes are deleted in the longer words to make short equivalents Mattiello (2008).

S. 1 Example: *totes (adv)*

Morphological rule: *totally (adv) + clipped -ally (suf-strip) + es (inf-suf) → totes (adv)*

The term *totes* is a back-formation of the word totally that denotes completion and absoluteness. Additionally, Pakistani netizens used the following back-formed slang: *vibe (vibration), selfie (self-portrait), luxe (luxary), hang (hangout), and item (item-number).*

Derivation is used to form new words by combining the root words and affixes (Yule, 2010, p. 58). Affixation includes prefixes, suffixes, and infixes.

S.1 Example: megastar (n)

Morphological rule: *megastar (n) + mega- (der- pref) → megastar (n)*

The term *megastar (n)* is a slang prefix formed by adding the prefix *mega* to the root word *star.* It indicates a well-known actor. Moreover, Beycahra (adj), microaggression (n), minivacation (n), defriend (v), pregame (n), and uncool (adj) are slang prefixes used among Pakistani netizens.

S. 1 Example: kiddo (n)

Morphological rule: *kid (n) + -do (der-suf) → kiddo (n)*

The term *kiddo* is formed by combining the base word *kid* and a derivational suffix *–do*. It refers to a young child. Besides, *Rattafication (n), bakwasiyaat (n), and bloody (adv)* are slang suffixes used among Pakistani netizens.

S.1 Example: Fan-freakin-tastic (adj)

Morphological rule: *Fantastic (adj) + -freakin- (der-inf) → Fan-freakin-tastic (adj)*

The term *Fan-freakin-tastic* is a slang infixation and means extreme enthusiasm. Additionally, freakin is an infix used as an intensifier for emphasis.

Mattiello (2008) elaborated that variation is a wide-range concept in which new words are formed by modifying the spelling of the words or the part of the existing words (p. 150).

The analogical process uses the constructive process for the creation of new words that are similar to the existing ones.

S. 1 Example: foodie (n)

Morphological rule: food (n*) + -ie (der-suf) → foodie (n)*

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The term *foodie (n)* is formed by adding the base word *food* and the derivational suffix *-ie* to make the analogical slang *foodie.* The analogical slang *foodie* is used to refer to a person who travels for food and visits food places.

S. 2 Example: *Techpreneur (n)*

Morphological rule: *technology (n) + entrepreneur (n) → Techpreneur (n)*

It is used to refer to a person who starts his business in technology or technology-related fields.

Malapropism is the preposterous and conscious misuse of words by mistaking a word for one that resembles it.

S.1 Example: It's a blessing in the skies

Morphological rule: a *blessing in disguise → a blessing in the skies*

The use of *in the skies* instead of in *disguise* is a malapropism and is used to convey the humorous and playful effect of unexpected advantages from an unfortunate event.

S.2 Example: *a wolf in cheap clothing*

Morphological rule: *a wolf in sheep's clothing → a wolf in cheap clothing*

The use of *a wolf in cheap clothing* instead of *a wolf in sheep's clothing* creates a humorous effect to refer to a person who hides his bad intentions. Moreover, Supposably (supposedly) and Expresso (espresso) slang are also used among Pakistani netizens.

Metathesis is a process of variation in which letters, sounds, or syllables are exchanged to form new words.

S. 1 Example: *Aks*

Morphological rule: *Ask → Aks*

S. 2 Example: *flustrated*

Morphological rule: *frustrated → flustrated*

Metathesis helps in switching sounds or rearranging sounds for easier pronunciation.

Letter pronunciation is a process of variation in which words are pronounced by the use of the initial few letters to present the whole word.

S.1 Example: *bro*

Morphological rule: *brother → bro*

Bro is an informal expression for brother and is mostly used among friend groups

S.2 Example: *fam*

Morphological rule: *family → fam*

The word *fam* is formed by shortening the word family and is used as an informal expression.

Alteration is the process of variation in which words are formed through the change in spelling, altering the root word or the sound of the words innovatively.

Peeps have been used by social media users that is an alteration for *people*, *cray* is also an alteration of *crazy,* while repetition is used for emphasis.

An extension is the addition of one or more syllables to a word that is not in proportion with the already existing suffixes.

S.1 Example: *Coolio*

Morphological rule: *Cool (n) + io (suf) → Coolio*

Coolio is an extension of the word cool and is used by Pakistani netizens to refer to something stylish.

Social media users manufacture different fanciful words to name things, products, or even persons, without any prior morphological process or without following the standard pattern of word

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formation. For instance, the word *Lit* has been formed to describe something exciting or trendy. Besides, Pakistani netizens used some other fanciful formations such as *twerk* and *slay*.

Multiple process is a process of word formation in which new words are formed through more than one process Yule (2010).

S. 1 Example: *blogosphere (n)*

Morphological rule: (a) *Blog (n) + atmosphere (n) → blogosphere (blend)*

(b): *blog (n) + sphere (n) → blogosphere (compounding)*

The term *blogosphere* is formed through blending and compounding. This term is used to refer to the collective community of bloggers or blogs on the internet. Additionally, Pakistani netizens used *mockumentary*, hangry, and *docudrama* that are formed through multiple processes.

Reversed forms are also known as back-slang, in which words are read backwards and yet they make sense Mattiello, 2008).

S.1 Example: *Yob*

Morphological rule: *boy (n) ↔ yob (n)*

The word *Yob* is created by reversing the word *boy.* The word *boy* is used to refer to a male adult meanwhile *yob* is used in a derogatory manner to refer to a young person with rowdy behaviour. Besides, Pakistani netizens used the following reversed forms *noitseuq (question),* end *(dne)* and *Gniod (doing).*

Contraction is the combination of two words by omitting a letter or two and replacing it with the sign apostrophe and creating a convenient and shortened equivalent of the original word (Nasir & Jassim, 2019). The following contractions have been used by Pakistani netizens.

Table 4.1 ***Examples of Slang Contractions***

Contraction	Original Words	Contraction	Original Words
Hafta	Have + to	Sorta	Sort + of
Might've	Might + have	Gimme	Give + me
Won't	Will + not	Wasn't	Was + not

Phonetic replacement is a process of replacing letters with numerical equivalents and alphabetic short equivalents to save space and time (Barseghyan, 2014).

S. 1 Example: *want2*

Morphological rule: *want (v) + to (prep) → want2*

The term *want2* has been formed by combining the base word *want,* and instead of using the preposition *to* the number *2* has been used for convenience. Pakistani netizens have been using the following phonetic replacements.

Table 4.2 ***Examples of Phonetic Replacement***

Phonetic Replacement	Original Words	Phonetic Replacement	Original Words
Ko6	Kuch (some)	Cu	see you
L8r	later	B4	Before
CR8	Create	G2cu	Good to see you

Leetspeak uses different combinations of ASCII characters or the number equivalents to replace the English letters to create a novel and humorous effect and is used in informal speech (Barseghyan 2014). Pakistani netizens used the following leetspeak on social media platforms.

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Table 4.3 ***Examples of Leetspeak***

Leetspeak	Original Word	Leetspeak	Original Word
N1c3	Nice	H4ppy	Happy
4r3	Are	H3ll0	Hello
P@ssw0rd	Password	Ch@t	Chat

Interjections are used to express sudden emotions like joy, grief, excitement, surprise, pain, and frustration (Crystal, 2004, p. 164).

Table 4.4 ***Examples of interjections***

Interjections	Meanings	Interjections	Meanings
aha	For comprehension	Ahem	Cleared throat for attention
Ah, ahh, uh	relief	Uhho	Amazement
Ewww	Disgust	Oooops	Acknowledge mistake

Phonemic repetition is the repetition of the same sounds in the pronunciation of the word. The same phonemes are repeated to put emphasis and to create a humorous effect in the informal conversation.

Table 4.5 ***Examples of Phonemic Repetition***

Phonemic Repetition	Original Words	Phonemic Repetition	Original Words
everrrrrrr	Ever	Tooooooooo	to
NOOO	No	incredibleee	Incredible
Whatttt	What	hyeee	Hi

Onomatopoeic words are used to express or imitate the sound in the form of words, such as hahaha indicates laughter (Barseghyan 2014).

Table 4.6 ***Examples of Onomatopoeic Spellings***

Onomatopoeic Words	Original Sound	Onomatopoeic Words	Original Sound
Woof woof woof	Dog's barking	Hahaha	Laughter
Toon toon toon	Drum beat, beep	Thooooooo	spit
uffffff	Sigh	Beep	electronic devices

A hashtag is denoted by a symbol (#) and used on the internet to organize groups and gather the related data of the same event, trend or theme as feeds of posts. It categorises the content and helps users to find the data online (Crystal, 2004, p. 151). *#PAKvsNZ, #CWC19, #PakvsWI match?* and *#Nationalism* are some examples of hashtags that have been used by Pakistani netizens.

Asterisks are the use of two stars (**) around words and words are sandwiched in between and used for the sake of emphasis (Crystal, 2004, p. 90). Some examples of asterisks by Pakistani netizens are as follows **papu bacha**, **meter ghoom jana** **Jugaarh** and **ditch karana*.

An emoticon is used to express one's feelings and mood through the pictorial representation of a facial expression using numbers, letters, and punctuation marks (Barseghyan 2014).

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Table 4.7 ***Examples of Emoticons***

Emoticons	Meanings	Emoticons	Meanings
:-)	Smile	;-)	Wink
:-o	Surprise	:(	Frown
^_^	Happy	:3	Cute

Emojis are digital icons and an integral part of internet conversations, helping to convey emotions and provide visual explanations of the mood and reaction. Emojis are used in text messages, emails, and social media posts.

Table 4.8 ***Examples of Emojis***

Emojis	Expression	Emojis	Expression
	laughter		Excitement
	Love, admiration		Angry
	Perfect		Celebration

Grammatical punctuation rules are violated on the internet, and repetition of punctuation marks is more common and used for emphasis (Barseghyan, 2014).

Table 4.9 ***Examples of Punctuation***

Punctuation Marks	Symbols	Punctuation Marks	Symbols
Hashtag	#, ###	Question mark	?, ???????
Ellipsis	……	Dollar sign	$, $$$
Exclamation mark	!, !!!, !!!!!!!!	At sign	@, @@@

The use of capital letters for emphasis is most common among Pakistani netizens, such as *When BURGER BACHA visits VILLAGE LE ME AND MY FRIENDS::0, WHAT A FINAL* and *This is so gud!!! Staying humble and PATIENCE is definitely the KEY*

The language that has been used by Pakistani social media users lacks capitalization, such as *balley balley pakistan wins yes yes yes we did it,* and *these shot siblings duo made eve literally cry 3...*

Misspell is also a characteristic of internet language, and in informal conversation, Pakistani netizens use misspelled words such as *celobritity, dresing,* and *defenately.*

Filler words are used in written or spoken conversations to fill the gap of pauses and to add emphasis. Filler words do not impact the language at a broader level. Pakistani netizens used filler words such as *uh, well, basically, like, um, so, kind of* and *you know*.

5. CONCLUSION

The 21st century is an era of technology that has given rise to new technologies, including the Internet. Internet usage among youth has given rise to many social media platforms that have impacted the language and created many variations. The present study reveals that Pakistani online communities use slang compounds that are uniquely created by themselves. Besides, abbreviations and acronyms are used among Pakistani netizens due to convenience and informality. Moreover, Pakistani netizens employ the clipping method for word formation, in which words are shortened. Pakistani netizens blend different words to create humorous effects. Slang reduplicative follows the standard reduplicative formation process. Moreover, back-formation slang is created by word formation in which affixes are deleted to make short equivalents. Furthermore, Slang words are

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created through the process of derivations, and the most common derivations used among Pakistani netizens are prefixation and suffixation, while infixation is rarely used. The present study shows that variation is used in the formation of slang words. Conversion conveys all types of meanings according to their use in the situation. Moreover, slang words are formed through fanciful formations and reversed forms. The present study finds some other processes of slang formation that are used by the online Pakistani community. Interjections are types of informal language used to express sudden emotions through the use of words. Moreover, Phonemic repetition is a process of word formation used by social media users. Furthermore, Onomatopoeic words are used to express or imitate the sounds. Likewise, hashtags and asterisks are the characteristics of slang language and are used by Pakistani netizens for convenience and emphasis. Besides, Emoticons are the symbols created through the keyboards, while emojis are the visual representation of emotions used by online communities and convey the mood or reaction of a person. Additionally, slang language does not follow the standard pattern of punctuation marks. Online misspellings are more common sometimes; people misspell words deliberately. Besides, online communication uses filler words in written form. The findings of the present research show that slang follows all the formation processes of words given by Mattiello (2008) except elliptic rhyming; slang words are created through many other processes, such as *leetspeak,* phonemic repetition, phonetic replacements, etc.

5.1 Recommendations & Implications

Slang language is dynamic, ever-changing, and unpredictable. Future researchers can study the variation, adaptation, and evaluation of slang. Cross-cultural studies can be conducted to find out how slang varies across different regions. The research scientist can further explore the role of technology in the evolution of slang language. The experts can add slang in language learning games to learn its use with formal language.

Slang reflects the cultural values, trends, and attitudes of the users; therefore, the research provides cultural insights into Pakistani cyber citizens. The current research provides insights into linguistic innovation, language creativity, and shift, and the evolution of the language. Moreover, this study can assist educational institutes in the development of more relevant and engaging material for language learners by comprehending the real-world use of language. Lastly, slang is a short-lived variety of language this research will aid in preserving the slang used by Pakistani net speakers.

The current research does not concentrate on the roles of gender, age, ethnicity, and social status in the use of slang language. Additionally, vulgar and abusive slang words are filtered. This research has not dealt with the syntactic, grammatical, and phonological features of the slang and is limited to the word formation process by Mattiello (2008).

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