



IRAQI
Academic Scientific Journals



العراقية
المجلات الأكاديمية العلمية

ISSN: 2663-9033 (Online) | ISSN: 2616-6224 (Print)

Journal of Language Studies

Contents available at: <https://jls.tu.edu.iq/index.php/JLS>



An Analysis of the New English Slang Words on TikTok: A Semantic Study

Israa Bahram Azeez ^{1*}

University of Tikrit

Israa.bahram88@tu.edu.iq

&

Huda Yaseen Abdulwahid²

International University of Erbil

Huda.yaseen@ue.edu.krd

&

Marjan Abbasian³

Cihan University

Marjan.abbasian@cihanuniversity.edu.iq

&

Rozhin Hosseini ⁴

Cihan University

Rozhin.hosein@cihanuniversity.edu.iq

Received: 1/ 3/ 2025, Accepted: 20/4 /2025, Online Published: 30/ 9/ 2025

Abstract

TikTok is one of the most frequently utilized platforms by the young generation, and the language employed on the platform is developing rapidly and is characterized by using novel slang words, abbreviations, and acronyms that are incomprehensible to users outside the TikTok community. It is crucial to study these new language elements to

* **Corresponding Author:** Israa Bahram Azeez , **Email:** Israa.bahram88@tu.edu.iq

Affiliation: Tikrit University - Iraq

© This is an open access article under the CC by licenses <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>



understand the nature of language development and to facilitate better communication. This paper aims to identify the most common words and abbreviations used by TikTok users, analyze their word class (noun, verb, adjective, or adverb), and examine their literal and contextual meaning. Additionally, the paper seeks to determine the extent to which these words and abbreviations deviate from the conventional English language norms. To achieve these objectives and collect data, 100 random videos featuring a variety of content were watched on TikTok from different pages. After watching the videos, 60 words and abbreviations were selected for detailed analysis. The data was analyzed qualitatively following a semantic approach. The analysis revealed that TikTok users have coined many novel terms, expressions, interjections, abbreviations, and acronyms to enhance simplicity, brevity, and time-saving. Some words were employed with contextual meanings that differ from their dictionary definitions, while other words are extended based on their connotation, these words convey a sense of community and carry an emotional resonance. Furthermore, the analysis indicated that the language on TikTok is significantly influenced by movies, songs, music, YouTube videos, trends, and hashtags hence, leading to the appearance of many interjections that are based on sound and music integration.

Keywords: TikTok slang words, Gen Z words, literal and contextual meaning, Abbreviation on social media

تحليل الكلمات العامية الإنكليزية الجديدة على تيك توك: دراسة دلالية

م.م اسراء بهرام عزيز¹

أ.م. هدى ياسين عبدالواحد²

م.م مرجان عباسيان³

م.م روژين حوسيني⁴

قسم اللغة الإنكليزية، كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية، جامعة تكريت، العراق 1

قسم اللغة الإنكليزية والترجمة، جامعة أربيل الدولية، إقليم كردستان، العراق 2

قسم تقنيات التصوير الاشعاعي، جامعة جيهان - أربيل، إقليم كردستان، العراق 3

قسم اللغة الإنكليزية، جامعة جيهان - أربيل، إقليم كردستان، العراق 4

المستخلص

ان منصة (TikTok) تعد أحد المنصات الأكثر استخدامًا من قبل الجيل الجديد، وتتميز اللغة المستخدمة على هذه المنصة بتطورها السريع واعتمادها على كلمات عامية جديدة، واختصارات، ورموز غير مفهومة للمستخدمين خارج مجتمع (TikTok). ومن الضروري دراسة هذه العناصر

اللغوية المستحدثة لفهم طبيعة تطور اللغة على هذه المنصة وتيسير التواصل بشكل أكثر فاعلية. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تحديد الكلمات والاختصارات الأكثر شيوعاً بين مستخدمي تيك توك (TikTok)، وتحليل فنتها النحوية سواء (اسم، فعل، صفة، أو ظرف حال)، بالإضافة إلى دراسة معانيها الحرفية والسياقية. بالإضافة الى ذلك، يسعى البحث إلى تحديد مدى مخالفة هذه الكلمات والاختصارات لقواعد اللغوية التقليدية للغة الإنجليزية.

ولتحقيق هذه الأهداف وجمع البيانات، تمت مشاهدة 100 فيديو عشوائياً على المنصة. وتضمنت الفيديوهات محتويات متنوعة ومن صفحات مختلفة. وبعد مشاهدة هذه الفيديوهات، تم اختيار 60 كلمة واختصاراً للتحليل الدقيق وخضعت البيانات للتحليل النوعي وفقاً لمنهج دلالي. وكشفت النتائج أن مستخدمي منصة تيك توك قد ابتكروا العديد من المصطلحات والتعابير والاختصارات والرموز الجديدة بهدف تحقيق البساطة والإيجاز وتوفير الوقت. كما أظهرت الدراسة أن بعض الكلمات تُستخدم بمعانٍ سياقية تختلف عن تعريفاتها القاموسية، في حين يتم توسيع دلالات بعض الكلمات بناءً على مدلولاتها الضمنية، مما يضيف عليها طابعاً مجتمعياً ويحمل أبعاداً عاطفية و أشارت النتائج إلى أن اللغة المستخدمة على تيك توك تتأثر بشكل كبير بالأفلام، والأغاني، والموسيقى، وفيديوهات يوتيوب، والاتجاهات السائدة، والوسوم (الهاشتاغات)، مما أدى إلى ظهور العديد من التعبيرات والتداخلات الصوتية التي تعتمد على دمج الصوت والموسيقى الكلمات المفتاحية: مصطلحات تيك توك العامية، مفردات الجيل (Z)، المعنى الحرفي والسياقي، الاختصارات في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is necessary for human communication to make requests, provide or request information, entertain, and do other activities. People can interact and converse with one another verbally or nonverbally through language.

The advancements in technology contributed to the evolution and development of social media platforms. With social networking emerging as one of the main means of communication, the usage of social media and the internet by young people has increased significantly in recent years. People do not speak to their professors or bosses the same way they would do to a friend or their parents. It is a vocabulary section that is seldom utilized in daily speech and might contain recently created terms and idioms in addition to newly extended or newly created words (Zhou & Fan, 2013). On the other hand, slang language can be a barrier to communication since it is not standardized and can vary depending on the community setting. It can also establish a communication gap between younger and older generations (Venter, 2017). According to Saputra and Marlina's (2019) research, slang terms coined and

utilized by online users have gained popularity, and social media users also employ these words. One social media platform that lets individuals utilize language to express themselves is TikTok. Versions of the current language are created in addition to new ones when TikTok is utilized. The language variation on the social network TikTok is becoming more and more varied, which leads to this linguistic diversity. These variables are social and situational in nature. English language has been changed significantly as a result of the internet's increasing influence and expanding popularity (Slim & Hafedh, 2019:56-71).

This research will focus on the most common words and abbreviations often used on TikTok platform. First, the study will determine the term's kind (word, acronym, or abbreviation). The term's origin will then be determined, along with whether or not it is new. Lastly, the study will examine the denotative and connotative meanings in the context of TikTok or according to dictionaries and the situational context.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The connection between language development and digital communication has emerged as a major area of study in sociolinguistics. Due to their dynamic and engaging character, social media platforms have become important drivers of linguistic change and diversity (Tagg, 2018; Danet, 2001). Of these, TikTok has become well-known as a distinct area that encompasses a range of linguistic idioms, helping to usher in the creation of what academics refer to as "New English."

In scholarly debates, social media's impact on linguistic variance is widely accepted (Crystal, 2011). With its vast user base and short-form video material, TikTok stands out as a language environment where new linguistic forms emerge and conventional norms are questioned. TikTok's framework, with its intrinsic creative elements, encourages language experimentation and creates a unique space for language variety to be expressed (Squires, 2019).

Smith's (2020) research highlights TikTok's worldwide influence on language dynamics. Users from various linguistic origins come together on the platform to produce, share, and interact with content, serving as a linguistic melting pot. The study of New English gains nuance from this international linguistic environment, which highlights the platform's function in promoting intercultural dialogue and linguistic convergence.

In the context of TikTok, defining New English entails recognizing its unique traits. Johnson's (2018) research emphasizes the significance of humor, acronyms, and meme-driven language as essential elements of New English in digital media. TikTok users use a variety of interactive methods, comedy, and irony to engage their audience, making the pragmatic features of their language use very fascinating (Danforth et al., 2020).

Examining the language environment on TikTok poses distinct difficulties because of the transient nature of the material and moral issues around data gathering. Gao & Yuan (2021) and Miller (2019) mentioned that many approaches have been used in previous studies, from user surveys and interviews to content analysis of TikTok videos. Yuniar et al (2023) in their paper entitled "An analysis of English slang words discussed by slang content creators on TikTok" investigated the types and the meaning of slang words used by content creators on TikTok. The study also explores the contribution of English slang words to language learning.

Ferstehanie, J., & Pratiwi, T. L. (2022) in their study entitled “ The effect of TikTok to develop students’ speaking skill: A classroom action research” examined using TikTok as a tool to improve students' speaking skills through Classroom Action Research (CAR) involving twenty- five students. The study concluded that TikTok engaged students and allowed them to express creativity during the process of learning.

Moreover, Mackey, A. E. (2023) in her thesis “ *Evaluating the evolution of the English language as seen in TikTok slang*” examines the contribution of slang on TikTok to the evolution of the English language, the study focused on whether slang terms are transitioning into mainstream usage. Furthermore, to acquire a deeper understanding of the patterns and trends in TikTok language, corpus linguistic techniques such as concordance, frequency analysis, collocation analysis, keyword analysis, and semantic & discourse analysis have been used (Liu et al., 2022).

Although previous studies offer significant perspectives on the language environment of TikTok, many deficiencies continue to exist. Certain pragmatic facets of New English on TikTok have received little attention, and a more thorough investigation of the worldwide variety of TikTok language is required. So the research questions are as follows:

1. What are the most recent words and abbreviations on TikTok?
2. Do these words and abbreviations deviate from the linguistic properties of the English language?
3. What is the contextual meaning of these words and abbreviations?

By filling these gaps, this study aims to address important research topics, such as analyzing the wider socio-cultural consequences of the platform and characterizing pragmatic elements in New English on TikTok.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study will tackle the new English expressions and abbreviations that are commonly used on TikTok. It will scrutinize thirty expressions and thirty abbreviations qualitatively following a semantic approach. A descriptive qualitative method was adapted to identify and analyze the meaning of the slang words. The steps of the analysis will be as follows:

1. The study will first decide on the type of term (word, abbreviation, acronym).
2. It will determine the origin of the term whether it is novel or not.
3. The study will analyze the denotative and connotative meanings based on the dictionary or their meanings in the context of TikTok.

4. DATA COLLECTION

Having watched 100 English videos with different contents on TikTok, the researchers have chosen the ones with novel terms and abbreviations a total of 60 words and abbreviations were chosen to be analyzed. The researchers saved the videos from which the data were selected as a documentation technique. The chosen samples will be discussed in the data analysis.

There are many new terms on social media however, this study is limited to the novel words and abbreviations employed by users on TikTok. It is also noteworthy that neither personal content nor political issues have been selected.

5.DATA ANALYSIS

A descriptive, qualitative method was employed to identify and analyze the meanings of the slang words on the TikTok platform. As shown in Table 1 below, the most common slang words were selected, then their part of speech was identified as assumed (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and interjections) to be analyzed following this pattern:

1. Literal meaning: the denotative meaning of these words has been analyzed based on dictionaries. Oxford and Cambridge dictionaries were adopted to elicit the literal meaning of the words. The origin of some of the words was traced to determine whether the words are novel or undergo a semantic shift as expanding and altering the meaning.
2. Contextual meaning: the connotative meaning was analyzed based on the usage in context on the platform and from slang dictionaries such as Urban Dictionary and Merriam-Webster. Finally, for each word and each abbreviation, a real sample sentence was chosen from the TikTok platform to be analyzed.

Table 1. Slang words on TikTok

No.	The Term	Assumed part of speech	Literal Meaning	Non-Literal Meaning
1	Finna	verb	None	Going to
2	Lit/fire	Adjective	Flames/heat	Attractive/beautiful
3	Extra	noun	Additional	Overdramatic person
4	Flex	verb	Stretch/bend	Show off
5	Karen	adjective	Name of female	A complicated woman
6	Slay	verb	Kill somebody/ something	Something/someone nice
7	Tea	noun	Type of drink	Gossip
8	Yeet	interjection	None	Throw something on a high-level
9	Ghosted	verb	The spirit of a dead person	Stop communication
10	Cancel	verb	“to decide that something that has been arranged will not now take place”	Exclude somebody from a group
11	cheaugy	adjective	None	Outdated
12	sheesh	interjection	None	Used to express excitement
13	salty	Adjective	Food containing or tasting of salt	Feeling sad
14	Clap back	verb	None	Revenge
15	Sending me	noun	None	Very funny
16	Bussin	Adjective	None	Delicious
17	No cap	noun	None	No lie
18	Drippy	Adjective	Liquid form/boring	Something/someone nice and awesome

19	Low key	Adverb	Doing something without getting attention	-Secretly -without attention
20	Simpin	noun	none	Strong admire of someone
21	Heather	noun	name of female	Being loved or liked
22	Shadowban	verb	none	Your content visibility on social media will be reduced
23	Gucci	adjective	name of a brand	Someone or something good or positive
24	Touch grass	adjective	touching grass	Go back to reality or take a break
25	Stan	noun	none	Somebody who admires a singer or a song
26	Slaps	verb	to hit somebody with your hand	Something desirable
27	Boujee	adjective	none	Someone who likes extravagant things
28	Rent free	adjective	without paying	When somebody can't stop thinking about somebody else or something
29	Bet	noun	to risk money on a race or an event by trying to predict the result	It is used to give an approval
30	Side eye	verb	none	Judging people

1. Slay

- a. The Literal meaning: According to the Oxford dictionary the word 'slay' denotes either killing something or somebody in a fight or having a strong humoristic effect on somebody.
- b. The contextual meaning: the contextual meaning is different; it refers to something pleasant or enthusiastic. An example of that on TikTok is:
 - Lord Huron's new song slays (a boy is dancing while listening to music)
 - Selanter's are slaying (people are listening to Selena Gomez's song)

2. Finna

- a. The literal meaning: a short version of 'fixing to'
- b. The contextual meaning: Based on Merriam Webster, 'finna' is a slang verb that means 'going to' such as a student is happy because he has no school on Monday and it is written
 - Monday: No school
 - # Finna sleep all day

3. Karen

- a. The literal meaning: this word originally is a name of females.
- b. The contextual meaning: It is used to refer to a middle-aged woman who thinks that she is better than others. An example from TikTok: # Teachers are Karens (a

- student wants to go out of the class to the toilet and the teacher does not accept saying why didn't you go during the break?)
4. Low key
 - a. The literal meaning: In the Oxford dictionary, low-key is an adjective that refers to doing something without attracting attention.
 - b. The contextual meaning: Low key is used on TikTok without a hyphen when someone likes to do something secretly, such as: I low key miss him (a girl says: I'm gonna show this video to my brother, but she does not find him in the room).
 5. Tea
 - a. The literal meaning: Dried tea leaves or a type of drink.
 - b. The contextual meaning: The word 'tea' refers to gossip and telling news. An example on TikTok is # when you have been waiting to spill the tea to your bestie all day. (a girl telling her friend the news and her friend seems shocked).
 6. Flex
 - a. The literal meaning: the denotative meaning of 'flex' based on the Oxford Dictionary refers to stretching or bending arms and legs before exercising.
 - b. The contextual meaning: the contextual meaning of 'flex' On TikTok means to brag or to show off something good and it is used as a verb or a noun such as: # Flexing myself because I feel confident with my new outfits. (a girl taking a video of herself showing off her new clothes).
 7. Yeet
 - a. The literal meaning: the slang interjection 'yeet' has no lexical meaning.
 - b. The contextual meaning: It is used on TikTok with two meanings, the first meaning is to throw something at a high level and the second is an exclamation after a victory or a win such as:
 - # Yeet (WWE celebrity enters a press conference after winning and as soon he enters he says: Yeet)
 - She said, go bother your father ..Yeet.
 8. Ghosted
 - a. The literal meaning: as a noun 'ghost' refers to the spirit of a dead person.
 - b. The contextual meaning: on TikTok, the word 'ghosted' is used as a verb for somebody who suddenly stops communication for a while. An example is # Top three reasons he ghosted you (a girl explaining why a boy might disappear and cut communication with his girlfriend).
 9. Cheaagy
 - a. The literal meaning: This interjection holds no literal meaning.
 - b. The contextual meaning: The word 'cheaagy' means out of touch and basic. and it is used on TikTok as an adjective to describe outdated things mostly to criticize fashion. An example is: when you realize that booties are cheaagy millennial thing and all the cool kids are wearing sneakers with every outfit (a video shows a group of friends wearing boots and another group wearing sneakers).
 10. Salty
 - a. The literal meaning: According to the Oxford Dictionary, salty is an adjective that denotes the taste of salt or a meal containing a lot of salt.
 - b. The contextual meaning: However, in the contextual meaning the adjective 'salty' means being frustrated or bitter about something or someone such as in: "I wish I

could forgive and forget, I'm sick of feeling salty, it hurts to hate somebody" (a girl in the video looks upset and she has written that it hurts to hate somebody).

11. Sending me

- a. The literal meaning: the literal meaning of this phrase does not make sense so the dictionary meaning fails to achieve the desired meaning.
- b. The contextual meaning: 'sending me' is used whenever somebody sees something very hilarious and want to share it with others. So for example, if a funny video is sent, it comes with the caption: "# this video is sending me". It means that it is extremely funny.

12. Clap back

- a. The literal meaning: The meaning of this phrasal verb is different from the meaning of its components, the two words clap (the act of hitting your hands many times to show excitement or appreciation) and back (located behind or at the back of something) together have no literal meaning.
- b. The contextual meaning: In the contextual meaning, this phrasal verb means giving back a sharp and fast response to criticism. It was first used in 2003 in a song, and since then it has become famous on social media and on TikTok. Such as this example:
 - A. How long have you been a firefighter?
 - B. Five years
 - A. Do you like it?
 - B. I Love it
 - A. You are one of the gangs who run into a burning building, no fear?
 - B. I run into a burning building while guys like you run away screaming like little girls. (The video shows two men in a TV program like a contest, the interviewer gives a sarcastic comment to the man and the audience start to laugh, as a response, the man gives a quick and funny answer that makes the interviewer embarrassed, and the video comes with the caption # when you clap back so hard).

13. No cap

- a. The literal meaning: According to the Oxford dictionary, this compound noun has no literal meaning. 'no' is used to give a negative answer or to reject something, and 'cap' means either a hat as in a baseball hat or to cover the top of something as "the mountains are capped with snow"
- b. The contextual meaning: On TikTok, 'no cap' means no Lie or serious. Such as: # This food is good no cap (A boy eating a sandwich).

14. Drippy

- a. The literal meaning: drippy is an adjective that refers to something in a liquid state or denotes falling in drops. In the Oxford advanced dictionary 'drippy' also means boring, stupid, and weak.
- b. The contextual meaning: According to Urban Dictionary 'drippy' means something 'cool and awesome' it is used mostly to describe fashion and style such as:
#Your outfit is drippy (a girl is happy because she uses a filter to scan her outfit and it tells her that her outfit is drippy).

15. Bussin

- a. The literal meaning: the word 'bussin' has no dictionary meaning
 - b. The contextual meaning: It means very delicious; it is mostly used to describe food such as: These chips are bussin! (a boy in the video describing that his parents are not home, so he is eating chips for dinner and he describes them as being delicious).
16. Sheesh
- a. The literal meaning: 'Sheesh' has no dictionary meaning.
 - b. The contextual meaning: 'Sheesh' is an interjection and it is used to show excitement and as a reactionary statement to something surprising such as: Who is brave enough to kill this beat.....Sheesh. (In a video a boy is dancing and he is trying a new beat).
17. Extra
- a. The literal meaning: In the dictionary 'extra' has two meanings; first it is used as an adjective to refer to something more than usual expected or it is used as a noun to denote something that costs more than normal.
 - b. The contextual meaning: this word is used as a noun on TikTok to refer to people who have overly dramatic attitudes. For example:
Elder sister: Are you done with your attitude? We are good now?
Younger sibling: You didn't even apologize
Elder sister: I just gave you a Melona!
Younger sibling: I will eat it and let you know how I feel
Elder sister: What!
The mother: laughing, you are all extra. (A girl trying to reconcile with her sister but who is not satisfied yet and the mother calls both of them as extra).
18. Fire:
- a. The literal meaning: Based on the Oxford dictionary, 'Fire' is used as a noun to signify both the heat and the flames additionally, it functions as a verb with the meaning of shooting bullets.
 - b. The contextual meaning: on TikTok, fire is used to express admiration to describe people, outfits, food, or movies. Such as # Brony's hoop shoes are so fire (a boy playing tennis wearing new shoes).
19. Cancel
- a. The literal meaning: 'cancel' is a verb that conveys that something that has been planned will not happen.
 - b. The contextual meaning: cancel is common on social media and TikTok and the original meaning of the lexical item has been extended to include people as well. So canceling someone means excluding him/her from something such as the following example 'Me canceling people # no time for lies and fakeness'.
20. Simpin
- a. The literal meaning: 'simpin' has no denotative meaning.
 - b. The contextual meaning: 'simpin' is used to refer to a man who highly admires a girl such as the following example:
'Hey, Mike why don't you come and hang out with the boys, stop simpin over Sara' (a man talking to his friend).
21. Heather
- a. The literal meaning: name of females

- b. The contextual meaning: Being loved or liked such as: My sister is literally a heather
22. Shadowban:
- a. The literal meaning: None
 - b. The contextual meaning: the words shadow “the dark shape that somebody/something’s form makes on a surface” and ban (not allowing something) have no denotative meaning when used together. Yet, their contextual meaning is that someone has been restricted on social media. It is mainly used when the visibility of your content on TikTok is reduced such as: # you are shadowbanned.
23. Gucci
- a. The literal meaning: It is the name of a brand.
 - b. The contextual meaning: the word ‘Gucci’ is used on TikTok as an adjective to describe someone or something good or positive such as: that dinner was Gucci (a man talking about his dinner to a friend).
24. Touch grass
- a. The literal meaning: None
 - b. The contextual meaning: this expression is used on TikTok when somebody wants to take a break or when someone is told to come back to reality such as # I need to touch grass (a boy telling his mom that he needs a break from his game).
25. Stan
- a. The literal meaning: None.
 - b. The contextual meaning: Somebody who admires a singer or a song. It is derived from the words ‘stalker’ and ‘fan’ and it has a positive meaning such as # she is Kpop stan (a girl dancing).
26. Slaps
- a. The literal meaning: To hit somebody with your hand
 - b. The contextual meaning: opposite to its dictionary meaning the word slap is used on TikTok to describe something or someone desirable and delightful such as: This song slaps (a boy dancing while listening to music).
27. Boujee
- a. The literal meaning: None.
 - b. The contextual meaning: this word is used as an adjective to describe someone who likes extravagant things: POV: you are a boujee Bangkok girl (a girl showing her elegant dress).
28. Rent free
- a. The literal meaning: living somewhere without paying rent.
 - b. The contextual meaning: When somebody can’t stop thinking about somebody or something such as: ‘this lives in my head rent free’ (a girl showing a video with the caption).
29. Bet
- a. The literal meaning: In the Oxford dictionary, bet means to risk money on a race or an event by trying to predict the result.
 - b. The contextual meaning: In contradiction to its literal meaning, the word ‘bet’ is not used to challenge something, it is used on TikTok to give an approval such as:

Are you coming to the party tonight? – Bet. (a boy asking his friend if he was going to the party)

30. Side eye

- a. The literal meaning: None
- b. The contextual meaning: It means a sidelong glance used to express criticism or doubt such as: stop side-eying people (a girl telling her friend who keeps judging others).

The second part of the analysis is concerned with acronyms and abbreviations on TikTok. Following the same method used for the analysis of words, the analysis of the abbreviations is as follows:

1. The most common acronyms and abbreviations have been chosen from the platform's videos, comments, and then their type and their full form are determined as shown in Table 2 below.
2. The literal meaning of these shortened forms is analyzed based on dictionaries.
3. The contextual meaning of the abbreviated forms is analyzed based on the context.

Table 2. Abbreviations and Acronyms on TikTok

No.	The term	Type	Full Form
1	SUS	Acronym	Suspicious or Shady
2	AS	Acronym	Adult Swim
3	GFI	Abbreviation	Go for it
4	SMH	Abbreviation	Shake my head
5	D-List	Acronym	Influencers
6	CO9	Abbreviation	Code 9
7	GOAT	Abbreviation	Greatest of all times
8	POS	Abbreviation	Parents over shoulder
9	CC	Abbreviation	Closed Caption
10	FR	Abbreviation	For Real
11	POV	Abbreviation	Point of view
12	TOH	Abbreviation	To be honest
13	1437	Cyber Numeric Term	I love you forever
14	WTF	Abbreviation	Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
15	NGL	Abbreviation	Not gonna lie
16	NVM	Abbreviation	Never mind
17	FTW	Abbreviation	For the win
18	HEA	Abbreviation	Happily ever after
19	TSTL	Abbreviation	Too stupid to live
20	BAE	Acronym	Before anyone else
21	BRB	Abbreviation	Be right back
22	FAQS	Acronym	Frequently asked questions
23	AKA	Abbreviation	Also known as
24	TBD	Abbreviation	To Be Decided

25	AFK	Abbreviation	Away from Keyboard
26	AFAIK	Acronym	As Far As I Know
27	KUDOS	Acronym	Well done=congratulation
28	ONG	Acronym	On God= swear to God
29	LGTM	Abbreviation	Looks Good to Me
30	G2G	Abbreviation	Got to go

1. SUS

Literal Meaning: According to the Macmillan English dictionary, it means suspicious or shady.

Contextual Meaning: there was someone being inspected by a machine and someone else commenting on this TikTok video saying “These new airport frisk machines are sus. Bro tried grabbing my prime. Hands off buddy. Then I heard a noise.....”

Sus in the aforementioned context means “suspicious”. That is, this machine is not trusted.

You might get a punch suddenly.

2. As

Literal Meaning: According to the Macmillan English Dictionary, it means “loke”

Contextual Meaning: It refers to adult-related programs since it is the adult-oriented nighttime programming block of the American children’s cable network Cartoon Network.

The context: An adult lady getting into a room forgetting something. Then she came back and locked the room with a red handprint on the door with (AS). This means it is adult’s time to watch TV.

3. GFI

Literal meaning: get fudge ice cream

Contextual Meaning: Go for it

The context: A conversation between a man and a woman. He is asking her “Do you know what I teaching?”. She replied : no. He said “ I am teaching acronyms.” He continued saying “ let’s learn some” “ Lets GFI”. She said “ Let’s get fudge ice cream”. He said” No, let’s go for it”.

4. SMH

Literal Meaning: Shake my head, Face palm

Contextual Meaning: Someone saying” People never learn from their mistakes, SMH”

5. D-List

Literal meaning: A list of names starting with “D”

Contextual Meaning: Someone posting a TikTok video “ Me pretending I am a D-list celebrity at a book signing and they mention how long they waited”.

6. Co9

Literal Meaning: Code 9

Contextual Meaning: My parents are here I can’t talk.

7. GOAT

Literal Meaning: The animal

- Contextual Meaning: Greatest of all times and it refers to someone who is the best in their field, at what they do. For example, Adil is a goat.
8. POS
Literal Meaning: none
Contextual Meaning: People over shoulder. Someone is telling her friend over the phone pos so make sure your parents are not seeing whatever you are posting.
9. CC
Literal Meaning: Sending an email to more than one
Contextual Meaning: Closed caption which refers to the words written at the bottom of TikTok videos. Someone is saying on TikTok “I get asked all the time how I personally CC my TikTok and because I want everyone to know a quick way to do this. I am going to show you”.
10. FR
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: For real to emphasize you are truthful or to express your shock. Someone is saying “FRRRRR the movie was boring”.
Someone else is talking to another one saying” Hey Dude I have to tell you a secret” the other one is saying “ What’s up?”. The first one “ I think I am falling in love with Karen”. The second one is replying saying “ What FR....”.
11. POV
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: Point of view. For example, there is a video on Tik Tok for someone getting in her coworker’s car and the driver is using the screwdriver to hit the engine button.
12. TOH
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: To be honest
Someone is posting “ Honestly I really don’t care anymore. Tbh I can’t even feel anything. I try to cry but I can’t . I don’t get excited over things”.
13. 1437
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: I love you forever. So 1 stands for the number of the letters of “I”, 4 stands for the letters of the word “love”, 3 for you, and 7 for “forever”.
14. WTF
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.
The context: The mother is picking up her children from the school. One of them is saying “ OMG I have H.W. WTF”
The mother is saying” What that means”.
The child “ Mom WTF means Wednesday, Thursday, Friday”
15. NGL
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: someone is posting her daily routine on TikTok , then she wrote “I am tired NGL” after finishing her exercise in the gym.
16. NVM
Literal Meaning: None

- Contextual Meaning: Never Mind, ending a topic, thought, or a question as follows:
The Context: Someone is messaging his brother writing” Hey, What is the Netflix password?” and once he clicks “Send”, he remembers that it is his mom’s birthday. So he has sent another message saying “NVM” in order to let him know that he does not need to respond.
17. FTW
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: for the win for something successful or having the potential to be successful as follows:
The Context: someone is saying to her friend “ white linen shirt FTW”
18. HEA
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: Happily ever after
The Context: Someone is saying “Everybody runs off into the sunset, and there is like this rainbows and clouds and sunshines and shimmers because things ended on a finished happy note. You can feel soft and fluffy about whatever is going on”.
19. TSTL
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: to stupid to live
The Context: Someone is saying” I hate TSTL characters in FMC film since they are running out into danger willingly knowing that you can’t save your own bacon”” They are hoping some guys or girls will come and save it for them”.
20. BAE
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: Love= Before anyone else.
The Context: Someone is texting his girlfriend writing “BAE” . She didn’t get it so he called her saying “ you are my BAE, before anyone else”.
21. BRB
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: SOON= be right back.
The Context: Someone is talking to another one, but he has to go to the restroom. He is saying I would BRB.
22. FAQs
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: Frequently Asked Questions.
The Context: Someone is ordering something online and once he goes down, he would see a list of FAQs such as which size is yours? Would it be refundable if you return the stuff?...etc.
23. AKA
Literal Meaning: None
Contextual Meaning: Also known as.

The Context: Someone is texting his friend asking her about another friend who has a baby called Mia writing. “Do you know that Hana AKA Ummia migrated to Australia?”

24. TBD

Literal Meaning: None

Contextual Meaning: To be decided, to be confirmed.

The Context: Someone is saying “the fourth act is probably a very movement has Ballet section. I think it is still TBD.

25. AFK

Literal Meaning: None

Contextual Meaning: Away from keyboard= offline.

The Context: Someone is texting his girlfriend writing “I will be AFK this week, so there might be a delay in message response”.

26. AFAIK

Literal Meaning: None

Contextual Meaning: As far as I know.

The Context: Someone is texting his girlfriend asking “AFAIK he is single”.

27. KUDOS

Literal Meaning: None

Contextual Meaning: Well done= Congratulations.

The Context: Someone is texting his girlfriend telling her “Finally I have submitted my research paper”. The other one is replying “KUDOS”.

28. ONG

Literal Meaning: None

Contextual Meaning: On God= Swear to God.

The Context: Someone is texting his girlfriend writing “I did not kiss her ONG”.

29. LGTM

Literal Meaning: None

Contextual Meaning: Looks good to me.

The Context: Someone is writing on TikTok “Having AI applications is LGTM”.

30. G 2G

Literal Meaning: None

Contextual Meaning: Have to go.

The Context: Someone is asking his friend “Are you coming to the party?”. She is writing “G2G, sorry, can’t make it.”.

6.FINDINGS

After analyzing the novel expressions and abbreviations used by TikTok users, the study reveals that these words undergo a significant semantic shift from their dictionary meaning. These semantic shifts include expanding, narrowing, metaphor, and hyperbole. Certain terms acquire new meanings that contrast sharply with their denotative meaning. However, there are some words whose pragmatic meanings are derived from their semantic meanings by extending one aspect of the linguistic term. For instance, the brand name ‘Gucci’ is highly famous, expensive, and of good quality. Hence, the positive connotation of the brand is used as an adjective to

describe a high-quality experience or something appealing. Another example is ‘ghosting somebody’, which entails ‘ceasing communication’, derived from a ghost's basic characteristic of being invisible and unseen. The findings show that the TikTok platform is a fertile ground to observe the effect of digital platforms and the new generation’s preference on the evolution of meaning.

7. CONCLUSION

The language on TikTok is dynamic, developing rapidly and continuously due to various factors such as the age of users, new trends, movies, songs, celebrities, and hashtags. The lexicons used on TikTok foster a sense of community, as many expressions are incomprehensible to those outside the TikTok community.

The findings suggest that slang on TikTok is evolving rapidly due to the nature of the platform and the users. An extensive semantic shift was observed. Words and abbreviations acquire new contextual meaning, which, through usage has replaced the literal meaning. Furthermore, Interjections have evolved on TikTok due to many factors such as the platform’s unique culture, rapid development, and the impact of trends. Content creators aim to produce content that is straightforward and impactful; hence, these interjections are formed through creative wordplay, audio clips, and lip-syncing. Additionally, interjections on TikTok often possess an ironic and humorous nature. Similar to interjections, abbreviations, and acronyms are extensively used on TikTok and they are crafted through trends. The platform's nature facilitates the creation and distribution of abbreviations and acronyms. Trending hashtags help in spreading new content because of TikTok’s algorithm. The videos on TikTok are brief and fast-paced, so users tend to shorten words and coin new abbreviated forms.

In Summary, the language used by users of TikTok is characterized by simplicity, brevity, and universality. The content reflects diverse cultures due to the massive number of users. Another notable feature is the integration of music and wordplay, and most users quote from songs, movies, and videos.

References

- Crystal, D. (2011). *Internet Linguistics: A Student Guide*. Routledge.
- Danet, B. (2001). *Cyberpl@y: Communicating Online*. Berg Publishers.
- Danforth, L., Severson, R. L., & Smith, K. (2020). The language of TikTok: The pragmatics of entertainment on social media. *In Proceedings of the 2020 Conference of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics: Human Language Technologies* (pp. 6206-6214).
- Ferstephanie, J., &Pratiwi, T. L. (2022). The effect of TikTok to develop students’ speaking skill: A classroom action research. *Wiralodra English Journal*, 6(1), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.31943/wej.v6i1.147>

- Gao, Y., & Yuan, Y. (2021). *Language preference on TikTok: A survey study*. *ACM Transactions on Social Computing*, 4(1), 1-21.
- Johnson, J. (2018). *New Englishes and digital media*. *World Englishes*, 37(4), 564-580.
- Liu, Y., Liao, H., Xie, N., Li, M., & Huang, S. (2022). A Corpus-Based Analysis of Language Variation on TikTok. *In Proceedings of the 2022 4th International Conference on Education and Multimedia Technology* (pp. 45-52).
- Miller, V. (2019). TikTok as a Platform for Digital Storytelling. *In Proceedings of the 52nd Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*.
- Merriam-Webster dictionary. Retrieved on 30th of June 2024 from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/finna>
- Mackey, A. E. (2023). *Evaluating the evolution of the English language as seen in TikTok slang* (Master's thesis, Wichita State University).
- Oxford Dictionary Retrieved on June 13th 2024 from Oxford dictionary website: <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>
- Saputra, L., & Marlina, L. (2019). An Analysis of Slang Words Used by Instagram Account Plesbol. *English Language and Literature*, 8(3).
- Slim, H., & Hafedh, M. (2019). Social media impact on language learning for specific purposes: A study in English for business administration. *Teaching English with technology*, 19(1), 56-71.
- Smith, J. (2020). The Global Language of TikTok: Examining New English. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 16(1), 195-214.
- Squires, L. (2019). Language and Creativity on TikTok: The Repurposing of Memes and Trends. *In Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Educational Innovation and Philosophical Inquiries* (pp. 111-119).
- Tagg, C. (2018). *Exploring Digital Communication: Language in Action*. Routledge.
- Urban Dictionary. Retrieved on June 13th 2024 from Urban Dictionary Website: <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Sheesh>
- Venter, E. (2017). Bridging the communication gap between Generation Y and the Baby Boomer generation. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 22(4), 497–507.
- Yuniar, A. N., Suwandi, & Prabowo, A. B. (2023). *An analysis of English slang words discussed by slang content creators on TikTok*. *Wawasan Pendidikan*, 3(1), 140-148. <https://doi.org/10.26877/wp.v3i1.10742>
- Zhou, Y., & Fan, Y. (2013). A Sociolinguistic Study of American Slang. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(12), 2209.