

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The rapid pace of technological development has had a revolutionary impact on social interaction, substantially altering the structure of contemporary society (Hanandini, 2024). The swift advancement of digital technology has resulted in the formation of a digital society, altering human behavior to prioritize practicality and efficiency (Hanandini, 2024). In this digital domain, people no longer just passively consume content via downloading; they actively contribute, produce, and upload new information through the formation of online communities. As McCulloch (2019) notes, traditional communication in the past, which was governed by very formal grammar rules and standard vocabularies, has been profoundly disrupted. Today's digital interactions are much faster, highly interactive, and driven by many form of communication. On the internet, people tend to put more weight on speed and emotion than on grammar. This means that internet users prioritize replying quickly and expressing raw feelings often through abbreviations, capitalized letters, and unedited thoughts rather than taking the time to construct grammatically perfect, formal sentences. Today, digital interactions that are much faster, very informal and very context dependent, have profoundly disrupted that traditional mode of writing and speaking (McCulloch, 2019). On the internet, people tend to put more weight on speed and emotion than on grammar. This means that in everyday digital conversations, people prioritize replying instantly often by using abbreviations, emojis, and slang rather than taking the time to construct structurally perfect, formal sentences The most visible evidence of this ongoing disruption of language is in the everyday communication style of the first generation to grow up entirely in the digital age: Generation Z.

Generation Z, commonly known as Gen Z, refers to the demographic group of individuals born between 1997 and 2012 (Dimock, 2019). As of 2026, this cohort is currently between 14 and 29 years old, making them the most active and influential on

the internet today. Unlike previous generations who had to slowly adapt to new technologies, Gen Z grew up with smartphones in their hands and continuous access to the internet. Because of this, they are the first generation to experience a truly seamless integration between their physical lives and the digital world (Turner, 2015). For them, the boundary between being "online" and "offline" barely exists. Furthermore, social media platforms are no longer viewed only as a tool for passing the time or finding simple entertainment. Instead, these digital environments function as their primary spaces for daily socialization, building friendships, self-expression, and personal identity. When interacting in these virtual communities, Gen Z users constantly look for ways to connect with others who share their interests and humor. To achieve this, language is used highly creatively as a tool to establish a sense of belonging and group solidarity. This strong desire to connect and show that they are part of the "in-group" naturally drives them to continuously invent, share, and popularize new forms of slang, turning everyday communication into unique cultural codes.

Historically, the concept of slang originated as a strictly spoken, informal type of vocabulary. It is important to clarify that slang is completely different from a pidgin or a creole. A pidgin is a simple mixed language used by two different groups to communicate, and a creole is a fully formed language that naturally grew from a pidgin. Slang, however, is not a new language. It operates strictly within an already existing language by simply changing or creating new words. It was initially created and used by very specific social groups who wanted to establish a strong in-group identity while intentionally excluding outsiders from understanding their conversations (Allan & Burridge, 2006). In the past, you would typically only find slang being used within closed circles, such as in street culture, youth subcultures, or even among people in specific professions who shared their own private jargon. However, as we entered the digital age, both the origin and the main function of slang have experienced a massive shift. Today, digital slang is no longer confined to local neighborhoods, specific cities, or small offline communities. Instead, it has transformed into a massive global phenomenon driven entirely by the power of the internet. A new word created by a teenager in one country can be adopted by millions

of people worldwide within a matter of days. Gen Z slang, in particular, stands out because it is highly characterized by a unique blend of internet irony, extreme hyperbole, clever abbreviations, and constant references to global pop culture (Tagliamonte, 2016). Popular expressions such as "slay" (doing something exceptionally well), "delulu" (being overly delusional or optimistic), "rizz" (having romantic charisma), and "sus" (acting suspicious) are not just random, meaningless internet words. Rather, they serve as powerful communication tools. By using these words, Gen Z users can instantly express complex feelings and relatable situations that standard English simply cannot capture in a single word.

The widespread use and rapid growth of Gen Z English slang have been massively accelerated by the explosive popularity of TikTok. Unlike older social media applications, TikTok is built around short-form videos and powered by a highly sensitive algorithm that quickly learns what users enjoy watching. Because of how this system works, TikTok becomes a space where different languages and cultures from all over the world easily mix together (Kennedy, 2020). Audio clips, digital trends, humorous memes, and new vocabularies can easily cross international borders and go viral across the globe in just a matter of hours, reaching millions of screens almost instantly. Because the platform connects users internationally, TikTok users are constantly exposed to global content on their feeds. For them, hearing, reading, and engaging with English Gen Z slang is no longer a rare event, but rather a very common daily occurrence. However, to actively participate in these global trends, users do not just passively consume these foreign words. Instead, they actively adopt, adapt, and translate these English slang expressions so that they fit naturally into their own everyday conversations. Through this daily habit, a unique language trend is created. TikTok becomes a space where global English internet trends mix directly with local Indonesian culture to create a fresh, local way of talking. For example, Indonesian users often take an English slang word and combine it with local Indonesian grammar. They add Indonesian prefixes like "ke-" or "nge-" to English words, creating hybrid slang such as "*ke-ghost*" (from the English word "ghosted") or "*kepress*" (from the English word "pressed"). This makes the foreign slang fit perfectly and naturally into an everyday Indonesian sentence.

Translating slang, especially on a fast-paced and highly dynamic platform like TikTok, presents significant linguistic and cultural challenges. By its very nature, slang is extremely informal and deeply rooted in specific situations, shared internet history, or inside jokes. Because it relies so heavily on context, a literal, word-for-word translation is almost always insufficient and ineffective (Baker, 2018). If someone simply translates the words directly without considering the culture behind them, they will completely fail to capture the true intended meaning, the underlying humor, or the specific digital vibe of the original text. For example, if the popular Gen Z English phrase "no cap" is translated literally into Indonesian as "tanpa topi," it yields a completely nonsensical meaning that leaves the local audience confused. The phrase actually means "I am not lying" or "I am telling the truth." Because direct translation does not work for these cultural expressions, TikTok users instinctively rely on more creative methods to get the message across. They naturally employ various translation strategies such as borrowing the English word directly into their sentences, adapting the concept to fit an existing local internet slang, or shifting the meaning through modulation (Molina & Albir, 2002). By subconsciously applying these translation strategies, users successfully bridge the cultural gap and recreate an equivalent meaning that feels natural, funny, and highly relatable to the audience.

While translation strategies have been a popular topic and widely discussed in academic research for many years, most of the previous studies have predominantly focused on formal and professional translation contexts. In these traditional and professional settings, the translation process is usually carefully planned, heavily edited, and guided by strict industry rules or standard dictionaries. Because academic attention has mostly been placed on these formal media, there is a noticeable and significant gap in current research regarding organic, user-generated translation practices on modern social media platforms. Unlike professional translators, everyday internet users do not follow strict linguistic guidelines or use dictionaries when they post online. Instead, they translate words spontaneously and intuitively just to participate in trending conversations. Consequently, the specific ways in which everyday digital citizens process, adapt, and translate highly contextual Gen Z slang within the fast-paced, unedited environment of TikTok remains largely underexplored

by researchers. This is known because a review of previous studies shows that most translation research only focuses on formal media, such as published novels or official movie subtitles created by professional translators.

This research aims to fill that gap by studying slang translation on modern social media instead of in traditional books or movies. By looking at how everyday TikTok users translate English Gen Z slang into Indonesian, this study wants to find out exactly what translation strategies they use. The goal is to see how regular internet users naturally act like informal translators to make foreign jokes and trends easy for their local audience to understand. This is important because it shows how people creatively handle new global language trends in their own country. Ultimately, this study will show that complex translation strategies happen naturally in everyday, simply means the process where internet ideas from English-speaking countries are taken, understood, and adapted by Indonesian users so that they make perfect sense in their own local digital culture. That young internet users are very smart at breaking down language barriers and mixing global trends with local culture.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

1. What types of English slang are found on TikTok based on Allan and Burridge (2006)?
2. What strategies are used in translating the English slang into Indonesian found on TikTok based on Molina and Albir (2002)?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

1. To identify the types of English slang are found on TikTok based on Allan & Burridge (2006).
2. To describe the strategies used in translating the English slang into Indonesian found on TikTok based on Molina and Albir (2002).

1.4 Significance of the Study

1. Theoretical Significance

This study contributes to the field of translation studies by focusing on the translation of non-standard language, particularly slang. It expands the understanding of how informal expressions are rendered into another language while maintaining their meaning and tone. The research also provides insight into the role of translation strategies in digital, user-generated contexts like TikTok.

2. Practical Significance

Practically, this study can benefit translators, students, and social media content creators who deal with informal and online language. By understanding which strategies are most effective for translating Gen Z slang, practitioners can produce more natural, culturally relevant translations. The findings may also assist educators and linguists in analyzing language change in digital spaces.

1.5 Methodology of the Study

According to Garg (2016), doing research means following a clear, step-by-step plan to discover new information and make sure the results are trustworthy. This plan involves deciding the main goals, figuring out who or what to study, choosing how to collect data, and analyzing the results carefully. Garg (2016) explains that a good research plan must be clear and consistent so that the findings are valid and reliable.

1.5.1 Research Design

The researcher designed this research qualitatively. This method is chosen because the study focuses on a deep exploration of specific linguistic units, namely the meanings and translation strategies of English Gen Z slang on TikTok. Instead of just using numbers to count how many times a word is used, a qualitative approach allows the researcher to deeply explore how and why TikTok users translate these specific English words so that they make sense in Indonesian. According to Gerring (2017), qualitative work is deeply focused on particular individuals, events, and contexts,

allowing for a rich and detailed style of analysis. Furthermore, Gerring (2017) explains that qualitative studies are often primarily descriptive, aiming to identify and thoroughly understand common or diverse patterns within a specific case. By applying this qualitative approach, this research can explain how English slang is naturally adapted and translated in the digital context of social media.

This qualitative method is highly suitable for this research because the main goal is not to count how many times a slang word appears. Instead, the goal is to deeply explore, identify, and describe the types of English slang used by Generation Z on TikTok. Additionally, this method gives the researcher the right tools to thoroughly analyze the translation strategies used when changing those English slang words into Indonesian. Social media slang is very natural, changes quickly, and relies heavily on internet humor and specific cultures. Additionally, this method gives the researcher the right tools to thoroughly analyze the translation strategies used when changing those English slang words into Indonesian. Social media slang is very natural, changes quickly, and relies heavily on internet humor and specific cultures. A strict numerical approach means using a quantitative method, where researchers only collect numbers, count word frequencies, and use math formulas. We know this approach would not work for this study because numbers cannot measure humor, human emotion, or cultural context. For example, simply counting how many times a slang word appears in a TikTok video will never explain why or how the user adapted the joke to fit local Indonesian digital trends. Therefore, the qualitative approach provides the best and most flexible way to capture and analyze this unique language trend.

1.5.2 Data Source

According to Dickinson, Ellison, and Webb (2003), a data source provides a rich resource of data that forms the basis for answering a wide array of research questions. In this study, the data source is the social media platform TikTok. Specifically, the data is taken from a single, highly relevant TikTok video uploaded by the account *@xclipz174*. The exact link to this specific data source can be found in the appendix.

The main criterion for selecting this specific video is that it contains a high concentration of English Gen Z slang expressions and has their Indonesian translations included directly in the subtitles. The main reason for selecting this specific video is that it contains a large amount of English Gen Z slang. The researcher determined this by conducting an observation. This means the researcher watched and reviewed the video beforehand and found that the creator used multiple slang words repeatedly within a very short amount of time, making it the perfect data source for this study. The data consists of the raw spoken and written languages extracted directly from this video. Even though the data is taken from only one video, it provides a very rich linguistic context (a speech about modern internet language), allowing the researcher to successfully extract 40 distinct slang data points for a deep analysis. To ensure the data is clear and valid, the detailed link, account name, and duration of the selected video are provided in the appendix. Furthermore, the selected video is systematically documented, downloaded, and captured via screenshots to serve as authentic evidence of the original context during the research.

1.5.3 Data

To fully understand what is being analyzed in this research, it is important to first define what "data" means in an academic context. According to a National Research Council report cited by Borgman (2010), data are fundamentally defined as "facts, numbers, letters, and symbols that describe an object, idea, condition, situation, or other factors". Furthermore, Borgman emphasizes that the concept of data is not exactly the same everywhere; it can vary considerably depending on the specific scientific discipline and the goals of the researchers. In linguistic and cultural studies, for example, data are not always just numbers or statistics in a spreadsheet. Instead, they can take the form of human records, digital interactions, and spoken texts.

In the context of this specific study, the data consists of raw, everyday linguistic expressions found on social media. More precisely, the data are the actual spoken and written English slang words, alongside their corresponding Indonesian translations, that are extracted directly from the single selected TikTok video. Regarding the total amount of data, this research collects and analyzes a

comprehensive dataset of exactly 40 distinct English slang terms that are highly used in current digital trends. To ensure the research remains organized and easy to understand, this collection of words is systematically categorized based on their slang types and the specific strategies used to translate them into Indonesian. Because listing all 40 terms directly in this chapter would be too much, the raw data has been moved. The complete and detailed list of all the slang terms analyzed in this study can be found in the Appendix at the very end of this thesis.

1.5.4 Method of Data Collection

According to Mazhar et al. (2021), data collection is defined as the process of gathering, evaluating, and analyzing precise understandings for research using typical authenticated methods. The method of data collection is chosen based on the aim of the research and its suitability for the specific type of study being conducted.

In this research, data is collected using the observation method. Observation simply means carefully watching and describing events, behaviors, and objects in a specific social setting (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). By using this method, the researcher can describe real-life situations in great detail, almost like taking a "written photograph" of what is happening (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). Instead of joining in on the activities, the researcher steps back and acts only as an observer. This allows the researcher to gather and record data exactly as it naturally happens on the internet. For this study, the observation focuses entirely on social media videos. Specifically, it looks at how everyday TikTok users talk and translate English Gen Z slang into Indonesian. To collect this data, the researcher watches the selected TikTok videos very carefully and takes detailed notes about the conversations, the digital context, and the translation choices the video creators make. Using a clear and organized observation process is very helpful because it saves time, prevents the researcher from being biased, and makes the final results much more objective and reliable (Angrosino & dePerez, 2000). In the end, this observation method gives the researcher the best way to accurately capture and study the fast, unedited language of TikTok users.

To gather the specific data, the researcher applies the note-taking technique. According to Stacy and Cain (2015), note-taking is an active process where a student or researcher translates information and reproduces it into personally meaningful written notes. This technique is directly relevant to the researcher's position as a detached observer, where note-taking serves as the primary tool to manually extract, record, and categorize the specific slang expressions and their Indonesian translations from the videos into structured research data without altering the original digital content. According to Mazhar et al. (2021), data collection is defined as the process of gathering, evaluating, and analyzing precise understandings for research using typical authenticated methods. Based on this framework, the steps for collecting the data in this study are as follows:

1. **Watching and Observing:** The researcher watches the selected TikTok video and carefully observes the context to deeply understand the use of English slang in the occurring situation.
2. **Transcribing:** The researcher transcribes the spoken or written English slang expressions and their Indonesian translations from the videos in-text caption.
3. **Note-Taking:** The researcher writes down, collects, and organizes all the identified slang and its translations to be analyzed further in the next step.

1.5.5 Method of Data Analysis

According to Perrier, Flori, and Bonnot (1998), data analysis aims to discover a possible structure of units by analyzing resemblances or dissimilarities between them, which involves separating objects into homogeneous groups and arranging them in a logical order.

This classification approach is combined with the content analysis method to dissect the communication context in this study. According to Devi Prasad (2008), content analysis is described as the scientific study of the content of communication, which focuses on analyzing the meanings, contexts, and intentions contained within messages. This definition is highly relevant to what the researcher performs in this study. The communication content extracted from the selected TikTok videos is

thoroughly analyzed and categorized. Specifically, the researcher examines the digital texts and utterances to classify the slang expressions into their respective types and to determine the translation strategies used in transferring them into Indonesian.

According to Perrier, Flori, and Bonnot (2003), data analysis aims to discover a possible structure of units by analyzing resemblances or dissimilarities between them, which involves separating objects into homogeneous groups and arranging them in a logical order. Applying this framework to separate and arrange the collected linguistic units, the researcher's steps are as follows:

1. Coding the slang found in the data: The researcher highlights, transcribes, and organizes the English slang expressions and their corresponding Indonesian translations extracted from the videos.
2. Identifying the types of slang based on Allan and Burridge (2006): The organized data is then categorized into specific slang types, such as fresh and creative, flippant, imitative, acronym, or clipping, to understand how the words are constructed.
3. Identifying the strategies in translating the slang based on Molina and Albir (2002): The researcher analyzes the Indonesian translations of the slang to determine which of the 18 specific translation techniques were applied by the content creators to transfer the context and meaning.
4. Drawing conclusions: The researcher concludes the findings from the previous steps to summarize the most dominant types of slang and translation strategies, providing a clear final result for the study.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focuses only on finding out the types of English Gen Z slang on TikTok and how they are translated into Indonesian. The scope of this research is strictly limited to sorting the slang using Allan and Burridge's (2006) theory and identifying the translation strategies using Molina and Albir's (2002) framework. The data used in this research comes from just one specific TikTok video uploaded by a single person (@xclipz174), which provides exactly 40 slang words and their

Indonesian subtitles. However, there are a few limitations to this study. The biggest limitation is that it relies on only one video from one creator. Because the data comes from a single source, the findings cannot fully represent how everyone on TikTok or other social media apps translates slang. Additionally, because the researcher only watches the video and does not interview the creator, the study can only explain the final translated words, not what the creator was actually thinking when making them. Finally, since the researcher is not a native English speaker, understanding highly cultural and fast-paced internet jokes poses a specific challenge for this research.

1.7 Status of the Study

Previous research has extensively explored the phenomena of slang and its translation across various media and cultural contexts. In the realm of digital communication, Sitohang and Damanik (2025) conducted a semantic analysis of Generation Z slang across platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter. Utilizing a qualitative-descriptive approach and ethnographic interviews, their study reveals that Gen Z slang undergoes complex semantic changes, including pejoration, amelioration, metaphorical extension, and narrowing. Furthermore, they highlight that these linguistic innovations function beyond mere communication; they act as vital tools for identity formation, emotional expression, humor, and social bonding within digital spaces.

The cross-cultural aspects of digital slang, Panchenko and Bondarenko (2025) investigated the translation of English Gen Z slang into Ukrainian. Their research emphasizes the hybrid, digital-first nature of modern slang, which heavily features lexical innovations, meme-based intertextuality, and phonetic stylization. They argue that translating such highly contextual language poses significant challenges, including cultural boundaries, rapid linguistic evolution, and a frequent lack of direct equivalence. To address these hurdles, they identified strategies such as cultural adaptation, paraphrasing, and idiomatic equivalence as effective methods for preserving the slang's emotional and social nuances without losing its original internet-born tone.

In literary translation, Adluna (2025) analyzed the translation strategies applied to slang expressions in the young-adult novel *Eleanor & Park*. By employing Butkuvienė and Petrulionė's translation strategies alongside Newmark's concept of meaning equivalence, the study examined how translators balance semantic accuracy with readability. The findings indicate that stylistic compensation was the most frequently used strategy, followed by softening and literal translation. This demonstrates that translators often prioritize restoring the original effect of the slang in the target text over strict literal accuracy, occasionally utilizing communicative translation to ensure the text remains accessible to the target readership.

In audiovisual media, Suminar (2024) provided a descriptive analysis of American teenagers' slang translation in the movie *Easy A*. Utilizing Gottlieb's subtitling framework, the researcher identified 64 distinct slang expressions within the movie's academic and social settings. The study found that the Transfer strategy was predominantly utilized, accounting for over half of the instances, which reflects the translator's commitment to preserving the original meaning and context of the source language. The Paraphrase strategy was the second most common, indicating a parallel effort to adapt complex expressions to be more comprehensible for the Indonesian audience without losing the intended emotional tone.

On highly contextual audiovisual translation, Rantala (2025) examined the Finnish subtitling of Australian prison slang in the TV series *Wentworth*. This research applied Díaz Cintas and Remael's subtitling strategies for culture-bound vocabulary to evaluate how professional translators handle coarse and exclusive language. The analysis revealed that transposition and explicitation (both generalisation and specification) were the most frequently employed methods. Rantala concluded that these strategies allow the translator to domesticate the expressions slightly to make them relatable to the target audience while maintaining the unique, secretive, and expressive characteristics of the original slang.

While these previous studies have provided comprehensive insights into Gen Z slang semantics, literary slang translation, and professional audiovisual subtitling strategies, there remains a distinct academic gap. The majority of existing translation research focuses on formal, professional outputs such as published novels or official

movie subtitles where the translation process is carefully edited and guided by industry standards. This current study diverges from these traditional contexts by investigating the organic, user-generated translation of English Gen Z slang into Indonesian specifically within the TikTok platform. Unlike professional translators, everyday internet users adapt and translate foreign slang spontaneously to participate in global trends. By applying Molina and Albir's (2002) translation strategy framework, this research seeks to fill the gap by demonstrating how ordinary digital citizens instinctively act as informal translators, naturally localizing global internet humor and language disruptions into Indonesian digital culture.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This thesis consists of four chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction. This chapter explains the foundation of the research. It contains the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose, the significance, the methodology, the scope and limitation, the status of the study, and the organization of the study.

Chapter II: Review of Related Literature. This chapter discusses the main theories used to analyze the data. It covers the definition and types of slang, the translation strategies, and the background of social media communication on TikTok.

Chapter III: Findings and Discussion. This chapter presents the main analysis of the research. It shows the types of English slang found in the data and deeply discusses the specific translation strategies used to convert them into Indonesian.

Chapter IV: Conclusion & Suggestion. This final chapter provides a clear summary of the overall research findings, giving direct answers to the problems stated in the first chapter. While adding practical recommendations for future researchers, professional translators, and educators regarding the study and translation of modern digital language.