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From acronyms to intimacy: Slang as a Sociolinguistic Bridge in Youth Interactions in Manokwari, Papua.

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ABSTRACT

Slang is not merely informal vocabulary but a powerful sociolinguistic resource through which youth negotiate identity, intimacy, and belonging in multilingual settings. This study investigates Papuan Malay slang as a sociolinguistic bridge among adolescents in Manokwari, West Papua, addressing a critical gap in region-specific research that has largely overlooked Eastern Indonesia's localized linguistic dynamics. Employing a descriptive qualitative design, data were collected from 60 university students through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, yielding 244 slang items categorized into Papuan Malay Original Slang and Borrowed Dialect or Language Slang. The findings reveal that slang formation is systematic and creative, predominantly shaped by acronym formation, blending, clipping, borrowing, and word modification. Results further show that local slang remains slightly dominant, reflecting strong community-based identity, while borrowed forms signal engagement with broader digital and global youth culture. Slang circulates through a dual pathway: media-driven exposure for borrowed forms and peer interaction for local expressions. Functionally, slang facilitates communicative ease, humor, intimacy, and selective in-group exclusivity. These findings demonstrate that youth language in Manokwari is not a passive reflection of external influence but an active site of linguistic agency where local and global resources are negotiated. This study contributes to sociolinguistic theory by foregrounding slang as a dynamic bridge across linguistic scales and highlights its role in sustaining cultural identity within globalization. It also offers practical implications for language education and policy, advocating a balanced perspective that recognizes slang as a complementary communicative resource alongside formal language competence.

1. Introduction

Language is a dynamic system that varies according to social context. Speakers continuously adjust their language to reflect the formality of interactions and their social positions, resulting in substantial linguistic variation. One of the most visible expressions of this adaptability is slang, a form of sociolect that reflects both linguistic creativity and social alignment. As Holmes (2013) notes, variation arises from both internal development and external contact, positioning slang as a key site where language, society, and identity intersect. Slang is therefore not peripheral but central to understanding language in everyday communication.

Among young people, slang functions as a powerful resource for expressing solidarity, intimacy, and group membership. It evolves rapidly under the influence of social media, popular culture, and peer interaction, and often replaces more formal expressions in daily communication. Empirical evidence shows that 95.7 percent of Indonesian adolescents prefer slang for its flexibility and comfort, while 76 percent use it frequently on digital platforms such as WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram (Budiasa and Savitri, 2021). These patterns highlight the increasing prominence of informal language in youth discourse and raise important questions about how slang operates in multilingual societies and how it shapes linguistic competence and identity formation.

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In multilingual contexts such as West Papua, Papuan Malay slang forms a dynamic repertoire blending local languages, Indonesian, and global influences, producing speech practices that are both locally rooted and globally connected. The interaction of indigenous languages (e.g., Doreri, Biak) with Indonesian and English-derived forms supports cultural preservation while engaging wider linguistic trends, showing how slang mediates identity and cross-border communication (Gasser, 2020; Igga, 2018; Moro, 2021). Language-contact studies in Northwest New Guinea further reveal extensive borrowing across Papuan and Austronesian varieties in domains like flora, fauna, and color terms, highlighting ongoing lexical exchange that shapes Papuan slang (Gasser, 2020; Moro, 2021). Translanguaging in Indonesian educational and popular culture contexts also demonstrates how speakers draw on full linguistic repertoires to negotiate meaning, identity, and agency in multilingual settings (Batu & Sukamto, 2020; Putrawan, 2022; Roche & Kruk, 2024). Overall, these studies portray Papuan slang as a fluid system shaped by sustained contact, cultural continuity, and translingual resourcefulness (Batu & Sukamto, 2020; Gasser, 2020; Moro, 2021).

Papuan Malay slang appears to develop organically within speaker communities, offering insight into localized linguistic creativity and identity negotiation that is less mediated by mass media than urban slang (Rasidjan, 2023). This pattern aligns with sociolinguistic perspectives that view language varieties as emerging from continuous community practice and social meaning rather than from external diffusion alone (Moro, 2021; Siregar et al., 2023). As a result, Papuan Malay slang forms a dynamic register shaped by everyday interaction, interethnic contact, and shifting social identities in Papuan contexts. This supports the notion of localized, community-driven innovation rather than top-down dissemination (Chao, 2021; Kaland, 2021).

Studies on related Indonesian varieties, including Betawi, Alorese, and Papuan Malay, show how language contact, prestige, and acquisition patterns influence linguistic development. These findings do not contradict the idea of organic emergence but instead clarify the mechanisms that support localized slang within communities (Cahyo and Tri, 2021; Kaland, 2021; Moro, 2021). While some studies emphasize broader processes such as multilingualism and contact, these factors complement rather than undermine the argument for community-based slang development.

Despite the growing body of research on slang, much of the literature focuses on urban, digital, or national contexts, leaving region-specific sociolinguistic dynamics underexplored. Studies such as Ridlo et al. (2021) and Susanto et al. (2020) examine Indonesian youth slang in online communication but do not address regional variation. Similarly, Maulidya et al. (2021) explore the influence of slang on national language identity without considering localized contexts, while Wijaya (2021) discusses rural and urban hybridity in Eastern Indonesia but does not focus on the sociocultural environment of Manokwari. As Chaer and Agustina (2004) emphasize, sociolects vary significantly across regions, which underscores the need for context-specific research. Theoretical perspectives from Spolsky (1998) and Wardhaugh (2015) further reinforce that language variation is socially distributed and context-dependent, while Eckert (2000) highlights the role of language in constructing social identity. Together, these perspectives demonstrate the importance of localized sociolinguistic inquiry.

This study addresses these gaps by examining Papuan Malay slang among university students in Manokwari as a localized yet globally influenced phenomenon. Its contribution lies in three main aspects. First, it distinguishes between Papuan Malay Original Slang and Borrowed Dialect or Language Slang, offering a more nuanced classification of youth language. Second, it provides a systematic analysis of word formation processes based on frameworks proposed by Yule (1985, cited in Suryaputra, 2004), Chaer (2007), and Agung (2005). Third, it conceptualizes slang as a sociolinguistic bridge that connects local identity with national and global linguistic trends. By integrating these perspectives, the study advances a more comprehensive understanding of youth language as both a linguistic and social practice.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to illuminate how young speakers in multilingual settings actively negotiate linguistic resources to construct identity and maintain social relationships. Accordingly, the study aims to identify the types of slang used by Manokwari youth, analyze the word formation processes that characterize these expressions, and examine the social motivations underlying their use. These objectives are grounded in the view that language functions as a tool for social action and meaning-making (Eble, 1992; Hidayah and Ramadhan, 2020).

The findings contribute to broader sociolinguistic theory by demonstrating that slang is a structured and meaningful communicative resource rather than a random or deviant form of language. Consistent with Partridge (1970) and Scott and Quiring (2007), slang facilitates informal interaction, strengthens group cohesion, and enables speakers to negotiate social boundaries. In addition, in line with Crystal (2008) and McEnery (2021), the study shows that digital media accelerates the spread and innovation of slang, while local interaction sustains its social relevance. This dynamic highlight the interaction between global circulation and local adaptation in shaping youth language.

Finally, this research has important implications for English language and linguistics studies, particularly in the areas of multilingualism, language variation, and youth discourse. It suggests that informal language practices such as slang should be recognized as integral components of communicative competence rather than as threats to standard language. As Crystal (2011) and McCulloch (2019) argue, contemporary language use is increasingly shaped by digital and social contexts, which requires more flexible approaches to language education. By acknowledging the coexistence of formal and informal registers, educators and policymakers can better support linguistic diversity, creativity, and effective communication in a rapidly changing sociolinguistic landscape.

2. Literature review

2.1 Slang as a Sociolinguistic Resource in Youth and Multilingual Contexts

Slang is not merely informal language but a socially meaningful sociolect that reflects identity, solidarity, and communicative creativity. Traditionally defined as group-bound and informal (Hornby, 1995; Sumarsono, 2011), slang also functions as a marker of belonging and shared understanding (Adam, 2009; Kipfer, 2007). Contemporary sociolinguistic perspectives emphasize its role in language variation and social practice, where linguistic forms systematically reflect social differences (Wardhaugh, 2015; Spolsky, 1998). Among youth, slang is central to identity construction and peer-group alignment (Aswin, 2015; Eckert, 2000), enabling speakers to negotiate social relationships while expressing individuality (Eble, 1992; Hidayah & Ramadhan, 2020).

In multilingual settings, slang becomes even more complex. In West Papua, Papuan Malay interacts with indigenous languages and global influences, forming a hybrid linguistic repertoire (Rahman & Yembise, 2018). This aligns with Crystal's (2008) view of language fluidity in the digital era, where forms such as *OTW* or *UUD* illustrate how global expressions are localized. However, most studies focus on urban or Western contexts, overlooking localized multilingual ecologies. Indonesian research often examines general or digital slang (Ridlo et al., 2021; Susanto et al., 2020; Maulidiya et al., 2021), while Wijaya (2021) addresses hybridity without focusing on Manokwari. Given that sociolects vary across regions (Chaer & Agustina, 2004), localized studies are necessary to capture linguistic diversity more accurately.

2.2 Word Formation Processes and Linguistic Creativity

Slang formation is systematic rather than arbitrary. Yule (1985, cited in Suryaputra, 2004) identifies key processes such as clipping, blending, acronym formation, and borrowing, complemented by Chaer (2007) and Agung (2005), who highlight context-specific processes like modification and sound alteration. These processes reflect linguistic creativity and efficiency, especially in youth communication. Acronyms and blends compress meaning into compact forms, aligning with the need for speed and recognizability in digital discourse (Crystal, 2011; McEnery, 2021). Clipping and borrowing enhance flexibility, while word modification signals local ownership and innovation (McCulloch, 2019).

Despite this, most research emphasizes global or urban slang, with limited attention to how such processes operate in localized multilingual contexts. Existing studies rarely integrate structural analysis with sociolinguistic function, creating a gap in understanding how linguistic creativity interacts with social meaning in specific communities.

2.3 Factors, Functions, and Circulation of Slang

Slang use is shaped by peer interaction, media exposure, and digital communication. Informal peer networks drive its creation and spread, while media such as music and film reinforce its circulation. For example, hip-hop and rap significantly influence slang usage and identity (Hidayat & Moehkardi, 2018). Social media further accelerates diffusion through real-time interaction and cross-cultural exchange (Crystal, 2008; McEnery, 2021).

Functionally, slang facilitates informal communication, enhances expressiveness, and strengthens group cohesion (Partridge, 1970). It also marks social boundaries, distinguishing insiders from outsiders (Scott & Quiring, 2007; Spolsky, 1998). In digital contexts, slang incorporates abbreviations and symbols to increase efficiency (Crystal, 2011). While some scholars argue that excessive slang use may weaken formal language competence (Holmes, 2013; Maulidiya et al., 2021; Budiasa & Savitri, 2019), others suggest that speakers can shift registers appropriately. However, how these dynamics operate in multilingual, localized contexts remains underexplored.

2.4 Research Gap, Novelty, and Implications

Overall, the literature confirms that slang is a dynamic phenomenon shaped by linguistic processes, social interaction, and media influence. Yet three major gaps persist: the lack of region-specific studies in multilingual, non-metropolitan contexts; the limited integration of structural and sociolinguistic analysis; and the insufficient exploration of how local and global slang intersect in identity construction.

This study addresses these gaps by offering a localized analysis of Papuan Malay slang in Manokwari. Its novelty lies in integrating sociolinguistic and morphological perspectives, distinguishing between local and borrowed slang, and examining their formation, circulation, and functions. Theoretically, it advances understanding of language

variation, identity, and multilingualism. Practically, it informs language education by positioning slang as part of communicative competence rather than deviation. More broadly, it highlights the importance of localized linguistic research in capturing the complexity of global language diversity.

3. Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design to investigate the sociolinguistic use of Papuan Malay slang among adolescents in Manokwari. This approach was selected because it allows for an in-depth exploration of naturally occurring linguistic phenomena within their social contexts. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for examining how meanings are constructed and how participants experience language in everyday interaction (Creswell, 1994; Trochim, 2006). In line with this perspective, the study emphasizes contextual interpretation, social processes, and the authenticity of data generated in real-life settings (Creswell, 2013).

3.1 Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted at the University of Papua, involving students from the English Education and English Literature departments. The participants consisted of 60 students from the first to seventh semesters during the 2023–2024 academic year. These participants were observed to identify the types of slang used, their meanings, and the linguistic processes underlying their formation. From this group, 15 participants were purposively selected for interviews based on their frequent use of slang. This selection enabled a more focused and in-depth understanding of slang categories, usage patterns, and social motivations.

3.2 Data Collection

To ensure richness and credibility, data were collected through three complementary techniques: observation, interviews, and document analysis. The use of multiple methods allowed for triangulation and a more comprehensive account of slang usage.

Observation was conducted in natural settings, including classrooms, campus areas, and student residences. The researchers employed non-participatory observation, recording naturally occurring interactions using observation sheets (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). This method enabled the identification of authentic slang usage, its contextual functions, and patterns of interaction. While observation could not capture participants' internal perspectives, it provided reliable behavioral data that complemented other methods.

Interviews were carried out with the selected 15 participants to obtain deeper insights into their slang usage. The interviews explored types of slang, sources of expressions, and reasons for their use. Conducted in Indonesian to ensure clarity and comfort, the interviews also helped identify word formation processes through participant-generated slang lists. Thus, interviews served both explanatory and confirmatory functions.

Document analysis was used to systematically classify the collected slang items. After gathering data from observation and interviews, the researchers categorized the slang expressions and analyzed their linguistic structures. This step ensured that the data were organized and aligned with the analytical framework of the study.

3.3 Data Validation

To enhance the trustworthiness and validity of the findings, this study applied triangulation by comparing data from observation, interviews, and documentation. This process ensured consistency across different sources and strengthened the credibility of the interpretations. By cross-checking participants' reported usage with observed behavior and documented forms, the study minimized potential bias and increased analytical reliability.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis, which aims to provide clear and systematic interpretation of organized data. The analysis followed several stages. First, the collected slang items were categorized into types based on their linguistic characteristics. Second, their meanings were identified and interpreted within their social contexts. Third, the word formation processes were examined using established linguistic frameworks. Finally, the reasons for slang usage were analyzed in relation to participants' social interaction and communicative needs.

Through this systematic process, the study produced a contextualized and comprehensive account of Papuan Malay slang as both a linguistic structure and a sociolinguistic practice. The integration of multiple data sources and analytical steps ensures that the findings are both empirically grounded and theoretically informed.

4. Results

The results of this study show that slang used by young people in Manokwari is diverse, systematic, and socially meaningful. The analysis reveals two main categories of slang, several productive word formation processes, different routes of circulation through media and peer interaction, and a range of communicative and interpersonal functions. Taken together, these findings indicate that slang in Manokwari is not merely informal vocabulary, but a dynamic sociolinguistic resource through which young speakers express identity, build intimacy, and negotiate local and wider cultural influences.

Overall, the results show that slang in Manokwari is not simply a set of informal expressions, but a dynamic sociolinguistic resource shaped by local creativity, peer interaction, and wider cultural circulation. The findings demonstrate that local slang remains slightly more dominant than borrowed forms, that slang is produced through systematic word formation processes, and that its circulation depends on both media exposure and everyday social contact. The data also show that students use slang mainly to facilitate communication, create humor, maintain in group privacy, and strengthen intimacy. At a deeper level, these patterns indicate that slang allows young speakers to remain locally grounded while also participating in broader youth culture. Through slang, they simplify interaction, regulate emotion, signal belonging, and display linguistic creativity. The details of these findings are presented in the sub sections below.

4.1 Distribution and linguistic profile of slang in Manokwari youth interaction

The findings show that slang used by young people in Manokwari is both extensive and systematically patterned. A total of 244 slang items were identified and classified into two broad categories, namely Papuan Malay Original Slang (PMOS) and Borrowed Dialect or Language Slang (BDLS). Of these, 132 items belong to PMOS and 112 items belong to BDLS. This distribution indicates that locally grounded slang slightly outnumbers borrowed forms. The significance of this pattern lies in the fact that youth language in Manokwari is not merely shaped by outside influence. Instead, it remains strongly anchored in local invention while also absorbing wider national and global expressions.

4.1.1 Distribution and Linguistic Profile of Papuan Malay Original Slang (PMOS)

The analysis shows that Papuan Malay Original Slang (PMOS) is not random but systematically organized around social meaning domains, particularly identity labeling, interpersonal evaluation, and emotional expression. Rather than presenting a long undifferentiated list, the data are reorganized into three functional clusters to better reflect their sociolinguistic roles. The table 4.1 briefly explained it.

Table 4.1. PMOS for Social Identity and Person Reference

No	Slang	Indonesian Meaning	English Gloss
1	Pucuk	Orang yang lebih muda	Younger person
2	Akar	Orang yang lebih tua	Older person
3	Perem	Perempuan	Girl
4	Keladi	Laki-laki	Man
5	Mangga	Cewek	Girl
6	Amber	Pendatang	Non-Papuan
7	Komen	Orang asli Papua	Native Papuan
8	Pace	Bapak	Father
9	Mace	Ibu	Mother
10	Dara dong	Kamu/Kalian	You

This table 4.1 grouping highlights how PMOS encodes *social categorization and relational identity*. These terms are not neutral labels; they reflect *age hierarchy, ethnicity, and group belonging.* For example, *pucuk* and *akar* index generational positioning, while *komen* and *amber* signal insider–outsider distinctions.

This supports the argument that slang functions as *identity work in interaction*, aligning with Eckert's (2000) view of language as social practice. The use of such terms allows speakers to quickly position themselves and others within shared social structures.

Excerpt 1 (S02, Obs., 11:12)
"Ko ini pucuk, jadi dengar dulu."
English: *You're still young, so listen first.*

This excerpt shows that slang is used not only descriptively but *normatively*, reinforcing social hierarchy.

Excerpt 2 (S07, Int., 09:21)
"Kalau bilang amber atau komen, langsung tahu dia orang mana."
English: *When we say amber or komen, we immediately know where someone belongs.)*

This indicates that PMOS serves as a rapid index of social identity, strengthening group awareness.

Table 4.2. PMOS for Evaluation, Traits, and Social Judgment

No	Slang	Indonesian Meaning	English Gloss
1	Abuti	Suka bohong	Liar
2	Mulba	Penipu	Liar
3	Kismin	Miskin	Poor
4	Kangker	Kantong kering	No money
5	Sirbeh	Cantik/Ganteng	Attractive
6	Mandacan	Manis dan cantik	Sweet and beautiful
7	Gatotel	Genit	Flirtatious
8	Babingung	Linglung	Confused
9	Loyo	Malas	Lazy
10	Trakos	Tidak kosong	Smart/cool

This cluster in table 4.2 demonstrates that PMOS is heavily used for *evaluative functions*, enabling speakers to assign judgments quickly and expressively. These expressions compress complex social meanings such as morality (*abuti*), economic status (*kismin*), and attractiveness (*sirbeh*) into *compact, socially loaded labels.*

Such usage aligns with Eble (1992), where slang acts as a *tool for social evaluation and stance-taking*. Importantly, these terms often carry *affective intensity*, making them more impactful than standard language equivalents.

Excerpt 3 (S04, Int., 10:21)
"Kalau bilang kismin, langsung kena, lebih kuat daripada miskin."
English: *When we say kismin, it hits harder than just saying poor.*

This illustrates how slang intensifies meaning, adding *emotional and social force.*

Excerpt 4 (S09, Obs., 14:05)
"Dia itu abuti, jangan percaya."
English: *He's a liar, don't trust him.*

Here, slang functions as *social warning and evaluation*, reinforcing group norms.

Table 4.3. PMOS for Emotion, Interaction, and Expressive Functions

No	Slang	Indonesian Meaning	English Gloss
1	Ongkos	Omong kosong	Nonsense
2	Yeskon	Ungkapan kagum	Wow
3	Yombex	Betul sekali	Yes/Correct
4	Tes to	Bercanda	Just kidding
5	Yara	Kasihan	Poor you
6	Hancurkan	Semangat/emosi	Go for it / expression
7	Sungla	Langsung	Go ahead
8	Tuhar	Astaga	Oh my God
9	Ji	Kaget + tidak suka	Mixed reaction
10	Koslet	Berlebihan	Too much

This group in table 4.3 reveals that PMOS plays a central role in *managing interactional tone and emotional* expression. These forms function as discourse markers, interjections, and stance indicators, enabling speakers to regulate conversation dynamically.

Unlike standard expressions, these slang forms are *context-sensitive and multifunctional*, often conveying layered meanings depending on tone and situation. This reflects Partridge's (1970) view that slang enhances communicative flexibility and emotional nuance.

Excerpt 5 (S11, Int., 08:17)
"Kalau pakai yeskon atau yombex, rasanya lebih hidup."
English: *Using yeskon or yombex makes the conversation feel more alive.*

This suggests that slang enhances *interactional vitality.*

Excerpt 6 (S06, Obs., 16:40)
"Tes to! Jangan serius begitu."
English: *Just kidding! Don't be so serious.*

Here, slang is used to *soften interaction and manage tension,* confirming its role in affect regulation.

Across these three tables, PMOS emerges as a highly structured sociolinguistic system rather than a random or incidental collection of lexical items. Its organization reveals a coherent functional pattern operating simultaneously on three interrelated levels: *identity marking (Table 1A), social evaluation (Table 1B), and interactional management (Table 1C).*

These dimensions are not isolated; rather, they intersect dynamically in actual discourse, where a single slang item may signal group belonging, convey judgment, and regulate conversational tone at once. This layered functionality demonstrates that PMOS is deeply embedded in everyday social practice, functioning as a flexible communicative resource that enables speakers to negotiate identity, express stance, and manage interpersonal relationships in real time. In this sense, PMOS reflects not only linguistic variation but also the social architecture of youth interaction in Manokwari.

Most importantly, these findings suggest that PMOS extends beyond mere linguistic creativity and should be understood as a form of *social competence and cultural knowledge.* Its use requires sensitivity to context, shared norms, and mutual understanding among speakers, indicating that slang proficiency is closely tied to pragmatic awareness and interactional skill. Meaning in PMOS is not fixed but co-constructed through repeated social interaction, insider knowledge, and collective experience. Thus, PMOS operates as a living communicative system through which speakers actively construct, negotiate, and reinforce social relationships, highlighting its significance for broader discussions of language, identity, and multilingual sociolinguistic practice.

4.1.2 Distribution and Linguistic Profile of Borrowed Dialect or Language Slang (BDLS)

The analysis shows that Borrowed Dialect or Language Slang (BDLS) forms a substantial and systematically organized part of youth slang in Manokwari. Unlike PMOS, which is deeply rooted in local interaction, BDLS reflects wider linguistic circulation shaped by Indonesian urban slang, English expressions, and digital communication. The data indicate that these borrowed forms are used purposefully rather than randomly, serving communicative needs such as efficiency, identity performance, and emotional expression. To clarify these patterns, the data are grouped into three main functional categories..

Table 4.4 BDLS for Digital Communication and Linguistic Efficiency

No	Slang	Indonesian Meaning	English Gloss
1	GWS	Semoga cepat sembuh	Get well soon
2	LOL	Tertawa terbahak-bahak	Laughing out loud
3	BTW	Ngomong-ngomong	By the way
4	OTW	Dalam perjalanan	On the way
5	ASAP	Secepatnya	As soon as possible
6	TBH	Sejujurnya	To be honest
7	CMIIW	Koreksi saya jika salah	Correct me if I am wrong
8	HBU	Bagaimana dengan kamu	How about you
9	PAP	Ambil foto	Post a picture
10	OTD	Pakaian hari ini	Outfit of the day

The data in Table 4.4 demonstrates that BDLS plays a significant role in supporting communicative efficiency, especially within digital environments. These expressions tend to be concise, easily recognizable, and widely disseminated across various social media platforms, which contributes to their rapid adoption and shared understanding among users. Their primary function is pragmatic in nature, as they enable speakers to convey messages quickly and effectively while still preserving the intended meaning. In this way, BDLS facilitates smooth and efficient communication without requiring lengthy or complex formulations.

Excerpt 7 (S11, Int., 08:17)
"Kalau chat, tong lebih sering pakai LOL, OTW, atau TBH karena cepat."
English: *When chatting, we often use LOL, OTW, or TBH because they are faster.*

This excerpt highlights the role of BDLS in facilitating rapid interaction.

Excerpt 8 (S03, Obs., 13:02)
"Sa OTW, tunggu saja"
English: *I am on the way, just wait.*

This shows that such forms have become fully integrated into everyday communication.

Table 4.5 BDLS for Identity, Lifestyle, and Social Trends

No	Slang	Indonesian Meaning	English Gloss
1	Bestie	Sahabat	Best friend
2	Slay	Sangat keren	Very cool
3	Pick me	Haus perhatian	Attention seeker
4	Ghosting	Menghilang tanpa kabar	Sudden disappearance
5	Insecure	Kurang percaya diri	Insecure
6	Toxic	Hubungan tidak sehat	Toxic
7	Bucin	Budak cinta	Love-driven person
8	Pansos	Panjat sosial	Social climber
9	HTS	Hubungan tanpa status	Undefined relationship
10	TTM	Teman tapi mesra	Romantic friend

Table 4.5 further illustrates that BDLS plays a significant role in expressing identity and shaping social positioning within the broader context of youth culture. These expressions are closely linked to contemporary trends, particularly those circulating through social media and popular discourse, which enhances their visibility and relevance among young users. As a result, BDLS functions not only as a linguistic resource but also as a cultural marker that reflects current values, attitudes, and stylistic preferences.

Through their use, speakers can signal their awareness of ongoing trends and align themselves with modern lifestyles and global youth identities. This alignment helps position individuals within a wider social and cultural network, reinforcing a sense of belonging while also allowing them to project a contemporary and socially informed identity.

Excerpt 9 (S05, Int., 17:10)
"Kalau bilang toxic atau insecure, langsung paham maksudnya tanpa jelaskan panjang."
English: *When we say toxic or insecure, we immediately understand without long explanation.*

This suggests that borrowed slang carries shared cultural meanings that are widely recognized.

Excerpt 10 (S08, Obs., 15:33)
"Dia itu bucin sekali, semua ikut pacarnya"
English: *He is such a bucin, he follows everything his partner says.*

This shows how BDLS is used to construct social identities and behavioral labels.

Table 4.6 BDLS for Evaluation, Emotion, and Expressive Functions

No	Slang	Indonesian Meaning	English Gloss
1	Bete	Sangat bosan	Bored
2	Galau	Bingung atau sedih	Confused or sad
3	Ambyar	Hancur secara emosional	Emotionally broken
4	Garing	Tidak lucu	Not funny
5	Cuaks	Ungkapan negatif	Negative expression
6	Sad	Sedih	Sad
7	TBL	Takut banget	Very scared
8	Ngabrut	Sangat lucu	Extremely funny
9	Gaje	Tidak jelas	Unclear
10	Gabut	Tidak ada kegiatan	Idle or bored

The data in Table 4.6 show that BDLS is widely used for expressing emotional states and evaluative reactions. These expressions allow speakers to communicate feelings in a concise and relatable way. Many of these forms are emotionally charged and widely understood due to their frequent appearance in digital discourse.

Excerpt 11 (S09, Int., 12:45)
"Kalau bilang ambyar atau galau, rasanya lebih dalam daripada bahasa biasa."
English: *When we say ambyar or galau, it feels deeper than using standard language.*

This indicates that BDLS enhances emotional expression.

Excerpt 12 (S02, Obs., 10:50)
"Film itu garing sekali, tidak lucu."
English: *That movie is so garing, not funny.*

This shows how slang simplifies evaluation while maintaining expressive impact.

Across the tables above BDLS emerges as a structured and functional linguistic system that complements local slang. Its usage spans communicative efficiency, identity construction, and emotional expression, and these functions often overlap in real interaction. This demonstrates that borrowed slang is not simply adopted but actively integrated into the communicative practices of Manokwari youth.

Most importantly, BDLS reflects the influence of broader linguistic circulation while still being shaped by local context. Its effectiveness depends on shared understanding and situational appropriateness, indicating that speakers selectively adopt and adapt external forms. This highlights that BDLS is not a passive reflection of global trends but a locally negotiated resource that expands the expressive range of youth language and reinforces their connection to wider sociocultural networks.

The interview data further reinforce this interpretation. Local slang is perceived by students as something that sounds closer, more familiar, and more naturally embedded in daily interaction, whereas borrowed slang is often associated with media exposure and wider trend circulation.

Excerpt 13 (S06, Int.1, 12:44)
"Kalau kata kata Papua itu biasa tong rasa lebih dekat, karena memang tong pakai dari dulu sama teman teman".

English: *Papuan expressions feel closer to us because we have been using them for a long time with our friends.*

This excerpt suggests that PMOS is experienced as emotionally and socially proximate. Its strength lies not only in frequency of use, but in its role as a marker of shared history and collective familiarity.

Excerpt 14 (S11, Int.2, 08:17)
"Kalau slang dari luar biasa tong tahu cepat, apalagi dari sosmed. Tapi kalau mau terasa pas, tong pakai sesuai situasi juga

English: *We usually learn outside slang very quickly, especially from social media. But for it to feel right, we still use it depending on the situation.*

This excerpt shows that borrowed slang is not adopted blindly. It is filtered through situational appropriateness and local communicative norms. In other words, borrowed forms gain value only when they can be meaningfully inserted into local interaction.

Excerpt 15 (S04, Int.1, 10:21)
"Ada kata yang kalau pakai bahasa biasa rasanya" datar, tapi kalau pakai slang langsung lebih kena.
English: *There are words that sound flat in ordinary language, but when we use slang, they feel much more expressive.*

This excerpt highlights one of the key findings of this subsection, namely that slang adds affective and interpersonal force. It does not simply rename things. It intensifies expression.

Taken together, the lexical distribution and the interview evidence indicate that the slang repertoire of Manokwari youth is not random or superficial. It is structured by a strong local base, enriched by external circulation, and sustained by the communicative need to sound expressive, relevant, and socially aligned.

4.2 Word formation patterns and the creativity of slang production

The analysis also reveals that slang production among Manokwari youth is linguistically systematic and highly creative. Based on the data, the identified slang items are formed through six recurring word formation processes, namely borrowing, clipping, blending, acronym formation, multiple processes, and word modification. These processes show that the youth speakers do not merely repeat ready-made expressions. They actively manipulate language to create forms that are shorter, sharper, more memorable, and more socially meaningful.

A key finding in this subsection is that *acronym formation and blending are especially productive*, followed by borrowing and word modification. This pattern suggests that the most successful slang forms are those that combine economy of expression with high recognizability. Young speakers appear to favor expressions that are easy to say, easy to remember, and rich in social meaning. In this sense, linguistic efficiency and stylistic distinctiveness work together. Overall, the findings in this subsection show that the word formation patterns of Manokwari youth slang reflect a productive linguistic imagination. Acronyms, blends, clipped forms, borrowings, and modified expressions all point to a youth community that values compactness, innovation, and expressive force. More importantly, these patterns demonstrate that slang is not simply collected from outside sources. It is continuously reworked, adapted, and recreated within local interaction. This makes slang production in Manokwari a clear site of linguistic agency and youth driven meaning making.

Examples in Table 4.4, 4.5 and Table 4.6 clearly demonstrate this tendency. Acronym based forms such as *HG*, *KJ*, *TMT*, *OPM*, *GWS*, *TBH*, and *CMIIW* compress longer expressions into highly portable units. These forms are efficient because they save time in conversation, but they are also socially strategic because they function as insider markers. Speakers who understand them immediately signal shared membership in a communicative community.

Blending is equally important. Forms such as *ongkos*, *bestu*, *jalpot*, *masehi*, *kangker*, *brownis*, and *mupeng* show how speakers combine fragments of existing words to create expressions that remain interpretable while sounding fresh and playful. The success of these forms lies in their double effect. They are at once familiar and novel. This gives them strong circulation potential because they are easy to understand yet still sound distinctive.

Clipping contributes to the informality and speed of youth interaction. Forms such as *kete*, *kelap*, *perkam*, and *perem* show that shortening is used not only for efficiency, but also for style. Shorter forms sound more relaxed and more natural in peer talk. Borrowing, meanwhile, broadens the repertoire by bringing in forms from other dialects, Indonesian youth slang, and English. However, borrowing in this context is not passive imitation. Borrowed expressions are socially localized and made meaningful through use in specific interactional settings.

Word modification provides one of the clearest signs of local creativity. Forms such as *potem*, *sirbeh*, *woles*, and *kismin* illustrate how speakers reshape words through reversal, sound change, or playful reformulation. These processes show that youth speakers are not only users of language, but also active shapers of it. The modified forms signal linguistic ownership because they display the ability to transform familiar expressions into locally recognizable slang.

This subsection, therefore, points to an important interpretation. Word formation in Manokwari slang is not simply a formal linguistic process. It is also a *social practice of creativity.* The structure of the slang reflects what speakers value in interaction, namely brevity, expressiveness, playfulness, and shared recognizability. The productivity of acronym formation and blending suggests that youth speakers favor forms that can travel quickly in conversation while still carrying strong social flavor.

To strengthen the table based presentation, this subsection can explicitly direct readers to the morphological evidence in the lexical tables by adding a linking sentence such as: *The word formation processes discussed here are evidenced across the representative items listed in Table 1 and Table 2.*

The qualitative data also support this interpretation by showing how students themselves perceive slang production as a matter of creativity and verbal skill.

Excerpt 16 (S03, Int.1, 15:09)
"Kadang tong bikin kata baru supaya lebih singkat, tapi juga supaya lucu dan gampang diingat".
English: *Sometimes we make new words so they become shorter, but also funnier and easier to remember.*

This excerpt directly confirms that slang creation is driven by more than convenience. Humor and memorability also shape lexical innovation.

Excerpt 17 (S08, Int.2, 17:32)
"*Kalau kata itu unik, biasanya cepat menyebar. Teman teman langsung ikut pakai".*
English: *If a word sounds unique, it usually spreads quickly. Friends immediately start using it too.*

This excerpt shows that linguistic form affects circulation. Novelty increases uptake, especially when it is combined with clarity and social appeal.

Excerpt 18 (S12, Int.3, 09:48)
"Tong suka kata yang pendek pendek karena lebih enak dipakai waktu bicara cepat atau chat".
English: *We like short words because they are easier to use when speaking quickly or chatting.*

This excerpt highlights the connection between form and medium. Shortened forms are especially valuable in fast interaction and digital communication.

Excerpt 19 (S09, Int.2, 13:05)
"*Kalau ada kata lama terus diubah jadi lucu atau beda, biasanya itu yang bikin tong rasa itu slang punya tong sendiri".*

English: *When an old word is changed into something funny or different, that is what makes us feel the slang really belongs to us.*

This excerpt is especially important because it captures the sense of ownership embedded in slang production. Local creativity is not just about inventing forms. It is about transforming language in ways that make it feel socially and culturally one's own.

Taken together, these six processes reveal that word formation in Manokwari youth slang is both linguistically productive and socially meaningful. Borrowing expands the repertoire, clipping accelerates and relaxes expression, blending creates memorable lexical wit, acronym formation compresses meaning into efficient codes, multiple processes show the layered mobility of slang, and word modification signals strong local ownership. Each process contributes differently, but all point to a youth community that values brevity, expressiveness, recognizability, and creative control over language.

The broader implication is that slang production in Manokwari should not be understood merely as deviation from standard language. It is a patterned form of linguistic agency through which speakers reorganize available resources into socially resonant forms. The creativity seen in these processes reflects not only verbal play, but also the ongoing negotiation of identity, belonging, and communicative style.

4.2.1 Borrowing

Borrowing is one of the most visible processes in the dataset, especially in the category of Borrowed Dialect or Language Slang. It allows youth speakers to expand their lexical repertoire by taking in forms from English, Indonesian urban slang, and other widely circulating youth registers. Representative examples include *GWS*, *LOL*, *pick me*, *toxic*, *insecure*, *BTW*, *OTW*, *bestie*, *ghosting*, *slay*, and *TBH*. These items show that Manokwari youth are not isolated from broader linguistic flows. Instead, they participate actively in contemporary media driven and digitally mediated language practices.

The key finding here is that borrowing does not function as passive imitation. Borrowed forms are selected, reused, and adapted because they serve specific communicative purposes within local interaction. Some borrowed items index trend awareness and digital literacy, while others provide compact labels for emotional states, social behavior, or relational experience. Their value lies not only in their outside origin, but in their usefulness once inserted into local speech.

A deeper interpretation is that borrowing allows young speakers to align themselves with wider youth culture without abandoning their local linguistic identity. Borrowed slang therefore works as a bridge between local belonging and translocal connectedness. It gives speakers access to socially current vocabulary while still leaving room for local interpretation and situational filtering. This means that borrowed forms do not erase local language practices. Instead, they widen the expressive horizon of those practices.

4.2.2 Clipping

Clipping refers to the shortening of longer words into shorter and more manageable forms. In the dataset, examples such as *kete* from *ketemuan*, *kelap* from *kelaparan*, *perkam* from *perkampungan*, and *perem* from *perempuan* show that clipping is a productive means of creating slang that feels faster and more relaxed. This process reflects a preference for linguistic economy, especially in casual speech and peer communication. The main finding is that clipped forms are not valued simply because they are short. Their appeal lies in the social effect they create. Clipped expressions sound less formal, more immediate, and more suitable for intimate interaction. They reduce the weight of ordinary vocabulary and produce a lighter conversational rhythm. In this way, clipping supports a speech style that is informal, efficient, and socially close.

A deeper interpretation is that clipping reflects the temporal pressure of youth interaction. In fast spoken exchanges and digital chats, shorter forms are more practical and more natural. However, clipping is not only functional. It is also stylistic. Speakers use clipped forms because they sound more colloquial and group aligned than their full versions. This means that clipping contributes both to speed and to identity marking.

4.2.3 Blending

Blending is one of the most creative and productive processes in the dataset. It involves combining parts of two or more words into a new lexical item. Representative examples include *ongkos* from *omong kosong*, *bestu* from *besi tua*, *jalpot* from *jalan potong*, *masehi* from *makan selesai hilang*, *kangker* from *kantong kering*, *brownis* from *brondong manis*, and *mupeng* from *muka pengen*. These forms show how speakers create expressions that are compact, humorous, and semantically rich. The main finding is that blending has strong circulation potential because it combines familiarity and novelty. A blended word preserves enough of its source to remain interpretable, but also sounds fresh enough to attract attention. This makes blending especially effective in slang production. It creates expressions that are easy to remember and socially rewarding to use.

A deeper interpretation is that blending functions as a form of communal wit. Many blended forms compress an entire social judgment or humorous observation into one lexical unit. Because of this, blends often feel more expressive than ordinary words. They are not merely shorter labels. They are mini commentaries on people, behavior, or situations. This helps explain why many blended forms remain memorable and circulate quickly within peer groups.

4.2.4 Acronym formation

Acronym formation is one of the most productive processes in the dataset. This process creates slang by shortening longer expressions into compact forms built from their initial letters or key segments. In the Manokwari data, acronym based slang appears in both Papuan Malay Original Slang and Borrowed Dialect or Language Slang, showing that this process is flexible across local and borrowed resources.

Examples from the local category include HG from *Harap Gampang*, KJ from *Kurang Jelas*, TMT from *Teman Makan Teman*, and OPM from *Operasi Paha Mulus*. Examples from the borrowed category include GWS from *Get Well Soon*, LOL from *Laughing Out Loud*, TBH from *To Be Honest*, CMIIW from *Correct Me If I am Wrong*, SKSD from *Sok Kenal Sok Dekat*, SKS from *Sistem Kebut Semalam*, CLBK from *Cinta Lama Bersemi Kembali*, PHP from *Pemberi Harapan Palsu*, HBU from *How About You*, OTD from *Outfit of the Day*, OTT from *Out of Topic*, ASAP from *As Soon As Possible*, BTW from *By the Way*, OTW from *On the Way*, and SBB from *Sorry Baru Balas*.

A key finding is that acronym formation supports both efficiency and social recognizability. These shortened forms are easy to say, easy to type, and easy to remember, which makes them highly useful in fast spoken and digital interaction. At the same time, they also function as insider markers because their meaning is most accessible to speakers who already share the same communicative background. In this sense, acronym formation is not only a strategy of linguistic economy, but also a way of strengthening group familiarity and interactional fluency.

A deeper interpretation is that acronym formation reflects the communicative preferences of youth discourse, which values brevity, speed, and expressive density. By reducing longer expressions into compact forms, speakers preserve social meaning while making it more portable and more adaptable to everyday interaction. This shows that acronym based slang in Manokwari is both practical and symbolic, since it condenses meaning while also signaling shared identity and contemporary youth style.

4.2.5 Multiple processes

Some slang items in the dataset are formed through more than one process, and these are grouped under multiple processes. In these cases, a form may first be created through blending or acronym formation in one linguistic context and then enter Manokwari youth speech through borrowing. Examples such as *jarum*, *coker*, *mupeng*, *gunawan*, *brownis*, *SKSD*, *UUD*, *SBB*, *CLBK*, and *PHP* illustrate this layered pattern. The key finding here is that some slang items arrive in Manokwari already carrying a history of prior linguistic transformation. When these forms are adopted locally, they undergo a second stage of social recontextualization. This means that multiple process forms are especially revealing because they show how slang can travel across communities while being reshaped at each stage.

A deeper interpretation is that multiple processes highlight the mobility of slang in contemporary youth culture. These forms are evidence that slang is not always created from scratch within one community. Sometimes it is inherited in transformed form, then reinserted into a new social environment where it gains fresh value. This makes multiple process forms particularly important for understanding how local youth language is connected to wider networks of linguistic circulation.

4.2.6 Word modification

Word modification is one of the clearest signs of local linguistic creativity in the dataset. This process includes reshaping an existing word through reversal, sound change, or playful reformulation. Examples such as *potem* from *tempo*, *sirbeh* from *bersih*, *woles* from *selow*, and *kismin* from *miskin* demonstrate how speakers manipulate familiar forms to produce locally recognizable slang. The main finding is that word modification foregrounds ownership more strongly than most other processes. While borrowing and acronym formation may rely partly on outside circulation, modification shows the speaker community actively reworking linguistic material into something that feels distinctly theirs. This process produces forms that are not only novel, but also symbolically local.

A deeper interpretation is that word modification turns language into a site of playful resistance against ordinary form. By distorting familiar words, speakers make them socially marked and group specific. This transformation creates a sense of shared ingenuity. The modified form feels special because it carries the trace of collective creativity. In this way, word modification is not only a linguistic operation. It is an act of cultural appropriation and symbolic belonging.

4.3 Sources of slang circulation through media and peer interaction

The findings show that slang acquisition among young people in Manokwari follows two main routes, namely media-based circulation and peer-based transmission. This distinction is crucial because it reveals that not all slang enters youth communication in the same way. Borrowed forms tend to travel through digital and mediated channels, while local forms are more strongly sustained through direct social interaction. In other words, the slang repertoire of Manokwari youth is shaped by both exposure and relationship.

A key finding is that social media functions as the most dominant source of borrowed slang, while friends' chats and everyday interaction function as the strongest source of local slang. This pattern indicates that BDLS is closely tied to wider circulation, trend visibility, and repeated media exposure. Expressions drawn from broader Indonesian youth culture, English, and digital discourse become available to speakers because they are encountered frequently through platforms, films, and informal online exchange. Their diffusion is accelerated by repetition, visibility, and the social prestige attached to current expressions.

By contrast, PMOS appears to circulate through a different logic. Local slang is not primarily encountered as content, but as practice. It is heard in peer talk, repeated in shared settings, and gradually normalized through frequent use among friends. This means that local slang is sustained less by mass exposure and more by social closeness. A term becomes part of the local repertoire when it feels usable, familiar, and meaningful within the interactional life of the group.

The contrast between these two routes can be clearly supported by the existing table based findings. The data on interview responses show that social media, movies, and chats are central to the spread of borrowed forms, while face to face interaction and friends' chats are central to the maintenance of local forms. The distinction is analytically important because it reveals that slang in Manokwari is shaped by two interconnected but not identical ecologies: one driven by circulation across media, and the other driven by repetition in friendship networks. To strengthen this subsection, the manuscript may retain or refine the summary display below:

Table 4.7 Main sources of slang acquisition

Source	Primary role in circulation	Slang type most associated
Social media	Main source of exposure and trend uptake	BDLS
Movies	Reinforces fashionable and borrowed expressions	BDLS
Friends' chats	Everyday peer based transmission	PMOS
TV programs	Supplementary source	BDLS
Songs	Minor but present influence	Both

This table 4.7 is useful because it shows that the channels of acquisition are not neutral. Each channel contributes differently to the shape of the slang repertoire. Borrowed slang depends more heavily on high visibility media, while local slang depends more heavily on everyday social interaction.

The interview data provide further depth to this pattern.

Excerpt 20 (S06, Int.1, 12:44)
"Sa biasa dapat banyak slang Papua dari teman teman. Dong sering pakai itu kata waktu tong bicara. Setelah sa tahu artinya, sa juga ikut pakai".

English: *I usually get many Papuan slang words from my friends. They often use those words when we talk. After I understand the meaning, I also start using them.*

This excerpt shows that local slang spreads through interpersonal repetition and gradual uptake. The speaker does not describe learning slang from a formal source, but from hearing it in ordinary interaction and then adopting it after recognizing its meaning and usefulness. This confirms that PMOS is socially embedded and community driven.

Excerpt 21 (S11, Int.2, 08:17)
"Kalau slang pinjaman, biasa tong tahu dari sosmed, film, atau chat. Karena sering muncul, jadi tong cepat hafal dan langsung paham pakainya".

English: *For borrowed slang, we usually learn it from social media, movies, or online chats. Because it appears frequently, we remember it quickly and immediately understand how to use it.*

This excerpt highlights the importance of repetition and visibility in the spread of BDLS. Borrowed slang becomes familiar because it is repeatedly encountered across multiple media environments. However, the fact that the speaker also emphasizes understanding how to use it suggests that exposure alone is insufficient. Social uptake still depends on practical usability in interaction.

Excerpt 22 (S02, Int.1, 09:56)
"Kalau kata itu sering muncul di TikTok atau film, biasa tong cepat ikut. Tapi kalau teman teman tra pakai, lama lama hilang juga".
English: *If a word appears often on TikTok or in movies, we usually pick it up quickly. But if friends do not use it, it eventually disappears.*

This excerpt adds an important layer of interpretation. It shows that media may introduce a slang item, but peer use determines whether it survives. In this sense, the durability of slang depends on a second stage of circulation, namely acceptance within the local group.

Excerpt 23 (S10, Int.2, 14:11) "*Kalau slang Papua, tong rasa lebih hidup waktu dengar langsung dari teman, bukan dari video atau postingan".*
English: *Papuan slang feels more alive when we hear it directly from friends, not from a video or a post.*

This excerpt is especially revealing because it suggests that local slang derives its force from social immediacy. It is not only a lexical form, but part of a lived interactional environment. This explains why PMOS remains resilient despite the strong presence of digital media.

Taken together, the findings in this subsection indicate that slang circulation in Manokwari is not a one-way process. It is shaped by a dynamic relationship between media exposure and local interaction. Borrowed forms often enter through digital routes, but they become durable only when localized in peer talk. Local forms, meanwhile, are maintained through repeated social use and remain strong because they are tied to familiarity, intimacy, and shared experience. This dual pathway shows that youth language in Manokwari is simultaneously connected to wider circulation and grounded in local relational life.

4.4 Social functions of slang in youth communication

The findings further show that slang is used by young people in Manokwari for clear communicative and interpersonal purposes. The interview data indicate that slang is not employed randomly or merely for novelty. Instead, it serves as a functional resource through which speakers manage interaction, shape emotional tone, and position themselves within peer networks. The strongest motivations reported by the participants are making communication easier and creating fun and humor, followed by secrecy, intimacy, difference, lexical creativity, reduced seriousness, and verbal skill. This pattern suggests that slang is primarily integrative, expressive, and relational in nature.

The table-based results make this pattern especially visible. The highest responses were recorded for communicative ease and humor, each mentioned by all participants, while secrecy and intimacy also received strong support. These responses show that the most valued functions of slang are not linguistic rebellion or careless informality. Rather, slang is appreciated because it makes interaction smoother, warmer, and more socially meaningful.

Table 4.8 Students' reasons for using slang

Function of slang	Number of participants
To make communication easier	15
Just for fun and humor	15
To be a secret	13
To produce deep and lasting friendliness or intimacy	11
To be different	9
To enrich the language by inventing new words	9
To reduce seriousness of a conversation	8
For delights in virtuosity	7

A major finding emerging from the table 4.8 is that slang in Manokwari functions first as a tool of *communicative ease*. Students associate slang with faster understanding, greater comfort, and more natural interaction. This means that slang is experienced as useful language. It allows speakers to communicate in a way that feels lighter, more familiar, and more appropriate to peer settings.

Excerpt 24 (S03, Int.1, 15:09)
"Kalau pakai slang, tong lebih gampang saling mengerti. Rasanya lebih cepat, lebih santai, dan lebih enak waktu bicara dengan teman".
English: *When we use slang, it is easier for us to understand each other. It feels faster, more relaxed, and more comfortable when talking with friends.*

This excerpt shows that ease is not only about brevity. It also involves emotional comfort and a sense of shared ground. Slang reduces distance and creates a conversational atmosphere in which speakers feel socially aligned.

A second major function is humor and affective regulation. Students repeatedly describe slang as making conversation more fun and less tense. This indicates that slang helps organize the emotional texture of interaction. It can soften awkwardness, reduce pressure, and create a playful atmosphere that strengthens group cohesion.

Excerpt 25 (S14, Int.3, 21:36)
"*Kadang tong pakai slang cuma supaya obrolan lebih seru. Biar suasana tra tegang, apalagi kalau ada teman lagi sedih atau capek".*
English: *Sometimes we use slang simply to make the conversation more fun. That way, the atmosphere does not become too tense, especially when a friend is feeling sad or tired.*

This excerpt suggests that slang is part of emotional management within peer relationships. It helps speakers maintain lightness and warmth, especially in situations where ordinary language may feel too flat or too formal.

A third important function is in group privacy and social boundary making. The strong response for secrecy indicates that slang also allows speakers to create a semi restricted space of understanding. In this sense, slang works both as a bridge and as a filter. It brings insiders closer together while also limiting transparency for outsiders.

Excerpt 26 (S07, Int.2, 11:03)
"Kadang tong pakai slang supaya orang lain tra langsung paham. Jadi cuma tong yang tahu maksudnya".
English: *Sometimes we use slang so that other people do not understand immediately. That way, only we know what it means.*

This excerpt highlights the protective and selective function of slang. It allows speakers to maintain intimacy and privacy in interaction without needing to move into a completely different code.

Another strong finding is that slang contributes to *intimacy and identity work.* Students do not only use slang because it is convenient, but also because it feels socially closer and more characteristic of their group. The use of slang can signal friendship, sameness, and emotional alignment.

Excerpt 27 (S05, Int.1, 18:27)
" sudah pakai slang yang sama, tong rasa lebih dekat. Kayak langsung nyambung begitu" .
English: *When we use the same slang, we feel closer. It is like we connect immediately.*

This excerpt captures the interpersonal force of shared slang use. The use of common expressions is not merely linguistic repetition, but a sign of mutual recognition and group belonging.

The lower ranked functions in Table 3, such as being different, enriching language, reducing seriousness, and delight in virtuosity, are also meaningful. They show that slang is not only practical and relational, but also stylistic. Speakers use it to sound distinctive, inventive, and verbally agile. This means that slang in Manokwari is not simply a tool for communication. It is also a site of performance and identity display.

The dialogue data further reinforce this interpretation. Slang appears in greetings, teasing, gossip, complaint, invitation, praise, emotional reaction, and encouragement. This distribution shows that slang is woven into ordinary interaction and not limited to a narrow functional domain. It is flexible enough to express humor, irritation, admiration, affection, and spontaneity. Such widespread use confirms that slang is deeply embedded in the everyday communicative life of the youth community.

Taken together, the findings in this subsection show that slang in Manokwari serves three broad functions. First, it facilitates communication by making interaction easier and more natural. Second, it regulates affect by creating humor, easing tension, and maintaining warmth. Third, it marks social positioning by signaling privacy, intimacy, distinctiveness, and group belonging. These functions reveal that slang is not peripheral to youth communication. It is central to how speakers manage relationships, emotions, and identity in everyday life

This balance between PMOS and BDLS suggests that slang in Manokwari is best understood as a *hybrid sociolinguistic repertoire.* PMOS indexes local belonging, shared cultural knowledge, and community based identity, while BDLS signals mobility, media exposure, and connection to broader youth styles.

The coexistence of these two categories shows that young speakers in Manokwari do not simply imitate outside trends. Rather, they actively negotiate between local rootedness and wider cultural circulation, producing a form of youth language that is both locally meaningful and socially current.

The interview data further reinforce this interpretation. Local slang is perceived by students as something that sounds closer, more familiar, and more naturally embedded in daily interaction, whereas borrowed slang is often associated with media exposure and wider trend circulation.

Excerpt 28 (S06, Int.1, 12:44)
Kalau kata kata Papua itu biasa tong rasa lebih dekat, karena memang tong pakai dari dulu sama teman teman.

English: Papuan expressions feel closer to us because we have been using them for a long time with our friends.

This excerpt suggests that PMOS is experienced as emotionally and socially proximate. Its strength lies not only in frequency of use, but in its role as a marker of shared history and collective familiarity.

Excerpt 29 (S11, Int.2, 08:17)
Kalau slang dari luar biasa tong tahu cepat, apalagi dari sosmed. Tapi kalau mau terasa pas, tong pakai sesuai situasi juga

***English:** We usually learn outside slang very quickly, especially from social media. But for it to feel right, we still use it depending on the situation.*

This excerpt shows that borrowed slang is not adopted blindly. It is filtered through situational appropriateness and local communicative norms. In other words, borrowed forms gain value only when they can be meaningfully inserted into local interaction.

Excerpt 30 (S04, Int.1, 10:21)
Ada kata yang kalau pakai bahasa biasa rasanya datar, tapi kalau pakai slang langsung lebih kena.
***English:** There are words that sound flat in ordinary language, but when we use slang, they feel much more expressive.*

This excerpt highlights one of the key findings of this subsection, namely that slang adds affective and interpersonal force. It does not simply rename things. It intensifies expression.

Taken together, the lexical distribution and the interview evidence indicate that the slang repertoire of Manokwari youth is not random or superficial. It is grounded in a strong local base, enriched by external influences, and sustained by the need to remain expressive, relevant, and socially aligned within diverse and evolving youth communication contexts across different social settings.

5. Discussion

This study demonstrates that slang among adolescents in Manokwari is not peripheral or incidental. Instead, it functions as a structured sociolinguistic resource that connects identity, intimacy, and multilingual negotiation. Four key patterns emerge. First, Papuan Malay Original Slang (PMOS) remains slightly more dominant than Borrowed Dialect or Language Slang (BDLS). Second, slang formation follows systematic linguistic processes, particularly acronym formation and blending. Third, slang circulates through both media-based and peer-based channels. Fourth, its primary functions include communicative ease, humor, secrecy, and intimacy. Taken together, these findings support the conceptualization of slang as a sociolinguistic bridge in youth interaction, consistent with perspectives that view slang as a medium of identity construction and group solidarity (Holmes, 2013; Hornby, 1995; Sumarsono, 2011).

A central contribution of this study is the demonstration that the coexistence of PMOS and BDLS reflects a layered multilingual ecology. Youth language in Manokwari is shaped by the interaction of local, national, and global linguistic resources rather than by a single dominant influence. This finding aligns with the view that language variation is socially distributed and context-dependent (Wardhaugh, 2015; Spolsky, 1998). The study further extends existing arguments by showing that local slang remains productive under global influence and retains social meaning through shared experience and everyday interaction (Siregar et al., 2023). It confirms earlier observations that Papuan Malay slang blends local languages with Indonesian and global elements while preserving cultural specificity.

Research in similar contexts supports this pattern, indicating that local varieties, including slang and regional dialects, continue to function as markers of social identity and community belonging despite pressures from standardization and globalization (Khoirunnisa et al., 2023; Nuraini et al., 2023). Studies of language mixing in Indonesia also show that regional languages interact dynamically with Indonesian, producing hybrid forms that reflect both local identity and broader linguistic influences (Husna et al., 2023; Yudhy and Nuraeni, 2023). Although some scholars argue that slang threatens standard Indonesian (Ahmad et al., 2022), evidence suggests that informal varieties generally coexist with formal registers rather than replace them (Hasjim et al., 2024). The persistence of local slang therefore reflects dynamic adaptation rather than linguistic decline.

At the same time, the prominence of BDLS highlights the role of digital media and translocal networks in shaping slang dynamics. This supports claims that slang evolves rapidly through online diffusion and cross-border communication

(Greenshields and Head, 2019; Lynnyk and Navrotska, 2022; Rauta, 2019). As a publicly accessible digital resource, BDLS illustrates how mediated environments accelerate lexical innovation and dissemination across transnational audiences. Complementary studies show that translation and platform-mediated interaction further drive the spread and refunctionalization of slang forms (Rauta, 2019). Research on online slang likewise confirms rapid, technology-driven change shaped by processes such as clipping and blending (Lynnyk and Navrotska, 2022). Overall, digital mediation and translocality play a central role in accelerating slang evolution in contemporary communicative ecologies.

Another important finding concerns the semantic and pragmatic richness of local slang. Many PMOS items function not only as lexical labels but also as condensed expressions of evaluation, emotion, and relational stance. This supports the argument that slang operates as an interactional resource through which speakers construct meaning, express identity, and participate socially (Eble, 1992; Hidayah and Ramadhan, 2020). In the Manokwari context, local slang carries strong affective and cultural significance and serves as a marker of shared history and group belonging.

These findings challenge the assumption that exposure to digital and global language inevitably erodes local linguistic identity. Instead, speakers actively negotiate the coexistence of local and global resources by drawing on multilingual repertoires in both face-to-face and digital interaction. Across multilingual and diaspora contexts, globalization appears to expand rather than replace local linguistic resources. It enables translanguaging, code-switching, and multimodal communication as strategies for belonging and identity construction (Han, 2021; Mona, 2024; Tseng and Hinrichs, 2021). Empirical studies also show that hybridity allows individuals to sustain local identities while engaging global networks (Han, 2021; Panzavecchia and Little, 2020).

From a linguistic perspective, this study confirms that slang formation is systematic and patterned. The prominence of acronym formation and blending supports theoretical frameworks that conceptualize slang as structured linguistic innovation rather than random deviation (Yule, 1985, cited in Suryaputra, 2004; Chaer, 2007; Agung, 2005). Acronym formation reflects a preference for brevity, efficiency, and recognizability, which aligns with digital communication practices (Crystal, 2011; McEnery, 2021).

Sociolinguistic evidence further shows that youths use linguistic forms as markers of shared knowledge and group membership, functioning as indexical signals within communities of practice (Grandez et al., 2023; Gritsenko and Laletina, 2024). Cross-cultural studies reveal similar patterns. The adaptation of English elements into local repertoires signals in-group belonging and bilingual creativity, while code-switching and lexical variation construct identity and social boundaries in online communities (Callesano, 2023; Gritsenko and Laletina, 2024). Overall, processes such as clipping, blending, and word modification are deliberate strategies through which youth shape language to meet communicative needs and signal group affiliation.

This study also provides a nuanced account of slang circulation. BDLS is primarily introduced through media channels such as social media, films, and digital communication, whereas PMOS is sustained through peer interaction and everyday communication. This dual pathway confirms the role of digital media in accelerating linguistic diffusion (Crystal, 2008; McEnery, 2021) while highlighting the continued importance of face-to-face interaction in determining social meaning. Media exposure alone does not ensure adoption. Slang becomes durable only when it is integrated into local interaction and accepted within peer networks.

In terms of social function, the findings reinforce classical sociolinguistic arguments that slang facilitates informal communication, strengthens group cohesion, and negotiates social boundaries (Partridge, 1970; Scott and Quiring, 2007; Spolsky, 1998). Communicative ease and humor emerge as primary functions, indicating that slang is valued as both a practical and relational resource. At the same time, secrecy and intimacy highlight its role in inclusion and exclusion, reinforcing group identity. Slang therefore operates not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a social practice embedded in everyday interaction.

Importantly, this study contributes to ongoing debates on the impact of slang on formal language competence. While some scholars suggest that frequent slang use may weaken standard language skills (Holmes, 2013; Maulidiya et al., 2021; Budiasa and Savitri, 2019), the findings here support a more balanced interpretation. Students use slang in context-specific ways and remain aware of its appropriateness. Slang does not replace formal Indonesian but complements it within a broader communicative repertoire. This has important implications for language education, suggesting that informal and formal varieties should be viewed as complementary rather than conflicting resources.

At the level of research contribution, this study addresses a significant gap by focusing on a non-metropolitan, multilingual context in Eastern Indonesia, which has often been overlooked in favor of urban or digital settings (Ridlo et al., 2021; Susanto et al., 2020; Maulidiya et al., 2021; Wijaya, 2021). Its novelty lies in three contributions. First, it provides a clear distinction between PMOS and BDLS. Second, it integrates sociolinguistic and morphological analysis to show how linguistic structure and social function

interact. Third, it demonstrates that youth language in Manokwari is shaped by the interaction of Papuan Malay, Indonesian, English, and digital discourse.

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The participants were limited to university students and may not represent all youth groups in West Papua. The qualitative design prioritizes depth over generalization, and the focus on lexical items does not fully capture variation across gender, social class, or communication platforms. These limitations suggest that the findings should be interpreted as context-specific rather than universally applicable. Future research should extend this work by examining slang across different youth communities, including non-academic and rural settings. Comparative studies between urban and rural contexts, as well as longitudinal research on slang evolution, would provide further insight. Additional research is needed on how slang interacts with gender, ethnicity, and digital practices, as well as its relationship with formal language competence in multilingual educational contexts. Such work would deepen understanding of how youth language evolves and its role in broader discussions of language, identity, and education in contemporary sociolinguistics.

6. Conclusion

This study highlights that slang among young people in Manokwari is not merely informal or playful vocabulary, but a dynamic sociolinguistic resource through which speakers build intimacy, negotiate identity, and connect local experience with broader linguistic influences. The findings show that Papuan Malay Original Slang remains slightly more dominant than Borrowed Dialect or Language Slang, indicating that local linguistic creativity continues to play a central role despite strong exposure to Indonesian urban slang, English expressions, and digital discourse. The study also demonstrates that slang is produced through six systematic word formation processes, with acronym formation and blending emerging as especially productive, while its circulation follows a dual pathway in which borrowed forms are largely introduced through social media and other mediated channels, and local forms are sustained more strongly through peer interaction and everyday communication. In functional terms, slang is used mainly to facilitate communication, create humor, maintain in group privacy, and strengthen social closeness, which confirms its importance as an interactional and relational practice rather than a random departure from standard language.

The novelty of this study lies in its focused examination of slang in Manokwari as a multilingual, non-metropolitan context that has been largely overlooked in previous research, as well as in its distinction between local and borrowed slang and its demonstration that youth language in this setting is shaped by the productive interplay of Papuan Malay, Indonesian, English, and digital culture. The implications of the study are both theoretical and practical, since it contributes to sociolinguistic discussions of youth language, identity, and multilingualism while also suggesting that educators and language planners should view slang not simply as a threat to formal Indonesian, but as a real communicative resource that can coexist with awareness of register and context. Future research is recommended to explore slang across different educational and non-educational youth communities, compare urban and rural Papuan settings, examine gender and interethnic variation in slang use, and investigate more directly how slang development interacts with digital platforms, formal language competence, and changing youth identities over time.

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