# THE ROLE OF INFLUENCERS IN THE DISSEMINATION OF NEW VOCABULARY

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***Abstract***
*The purpose of this study is to examine the role of influencers in the dissemination of new vocabulary through social media. This research employs a qualitative research method involving social media content analysis and literature review. The study focuses on the mechanisms of new vocabulary dissemination and its impact on social communication and the development of the Indonesian language. The findings reveal that influencers utilize social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to create engaging and relevant content. Creative content in the form of short videos, memes, or interactive stories is often used to introduce new terms. Examples of vocabulary such as "Santuy," "Asyiap," and "Mager" have gained popularity through these platforms. Social media algorithms accelerate the spread of terms by increasing the visibility of content with high interaction. Additionally, direct interactions with followers through live broadcasts or Q&A sessions strengthen the emotional connection between influencers and their audience, facilitating the adoption of new vocabulary. The impact of this phenomenon is the enrichment of colloquial language, the creation of group identity, and the strengthening of relationships within digital communities. This phenomenon has also changed perceptions of the formality of the Indonesian language, with an increasing use of non-standard terms in various contexts, including in marketing. Some companies have even started adopting new vocabulary in their branding strategies. The contribution of this study can serve as a guide for educators and policymakers to understand the dynamics of language development among the younger generation, as well as to design language learning strategies that are more relevant to the language evolving on social media.*

***Keywords:*** *influencer; new vocabulary; social media; slang; young generation*

## INTRODUCTION

Language, as a symbolic system, consists of sounds that individuals within a social group use to interact and convey messages. As a medium of communication, language acts as a connector in the exchange of information between individuals or groups in communication (Laurensia Ndraha, et.al., 2024). Over time, the phenomenon of the Indonesian language has undergone rapid changes, particularly among the younger generation. In the midst of ongoing globalization and rapid technological advancements, teenagers play a key role in the use and formation of language. According to Afandi (2019), adolescence is the most fascinating and meaningful stage of life, both in terms of lifestyle and language use. Teenagers, with

their curiosity and freedom of expression, not only change the structure of language but also create new language that is often only understood by their own group. One of the distinctive features of teenage language is creativity in creating new vocabulary, which, although temporary, has a significant impact on the development of the Indonesian language (Amalia et al., 2023; Febriana, et al., 2024). The increasing creation of words that do not follow existing rules and standards is certainly intriguing to observe. The creation of new words enriches the vocabulary of the Indonesian language, especially in the language used by teenagers. The addition of new vocabulary, new language theories will also emerge to accommodate these words, which requires corresponding grammar. In this process, teenagers need media to channel their curiosity and freedom. One of the fastest ways in the current era of globalization is through social media. Social media consists of internet-based applications that allow the creation of interactive websites (Syarifuddin & Hafid, 2018).

A study discussed by Fajar titled "New Vocabulary in News Coverage on the COVID-19 Pandemic and its use in Indonesian Language Learning in Junior High Schools" addresses the new vocabulary that emerged in news coverage about the COVID-19 pandemic and its use in Indonesian language learning in junior high schools. This study uses content analysis of Kompas newspaper to identify new linguistic forms and the process of creating new words (Annisa, et al., 2022; Ansari, et al., 2020; Beemt, et al., 2020). Another study titled "Analysis of the Impact of Social Media on the Development of the Indonesian Language in Junior High School Students" researched by Waruwu et al. (2024) examines the impact of social media on the vocabulary development of Junior High School students, a group known for their strong curiosity. This study found that students who are active on social media have a larger vocabulary compared to those less active on social media. The new vocabulary learned through social media is more engaging and relevant than the vocabulary taught formally in class. Social media has become the primary source of new vocabulary, much of which takes the form of slang (Waruwu et al., 2024).

Furthermore, a study titled "Analysis of Instagram's Role in the Spread of New Vocabulary Among the Youth" discussed by Amalia et al., (2023) examines Instagram as a primary platform for spreading new vocabulary. The study suggests that new vocabulary is more easily adopted when presented in visually and audibly appealing formats, such as short videos or memes. Its spread is heavily influenced by Instagram's algorithm, which promotes content with high interaction levels. Terms introduced by influencers quickly go viral if the content receives a lot of likes, comments, or shares (Amalia et al., 2023). Subsequently, a study by Bangun et al. (2024) titled "Analysis of the Influence of Social Media on the Development of the Indonesian Language in the Era of Globalization" explores the impact of social media on the Indonesian language, including vocabulary and grammar. This research notes challenges in maintaining alignment between the language evolving on social media and the formal grammar rules. For example, terms like "FYP" (For Your Page) or "healing" are often used without regard for correct Indonesian grammatical context, showing a shift in perceptions of language formality (Bangun et al., 2024).

The gap in previous studies lies in the lack of focus on the role of influencers as key agents in spreading new vocabulary. Although studies such as those by Fajar, Waruwu et al. (2024), Amalia et al. (2023), and Bangun et al., (2024) discuss the influence of social media and news coverage on language development,

they focus more on social media as a general platform without delving into how influencers, with their narrative power and social networks, influence the adoption of new vocabulary within society. This research offers novelty by focusing on the role of influencers as the primary drivers of new vocabulary dissemination, a topic not yet extensively explored in previous literature. Therefore, this article aims to identify how influencers can influence the adoption of new vocabulary, as well as how their social media presence plays a role in this process. The novelty of this research lies in emphasizing influencers as agents of new vocabulary dissemination, a topic that has not been widely discussed in previous studies that have primarily focused on social media in general.

## LITERATURE REVIEW
### *Influencers*
An influencer is an individual who holds significant influence on social media due to their large following, which can range from hundreds of thousands to millions of people, and their ability to shape the opinions, behaviours, or preferences of their followers. Influencers often become trendsetters in various fields, including fashion, technology, lifestyle, and language (Dwiyanto, 2024). An influencer is someone who can influence others. According to Marketing Hub, an influencer is an individual who has the power to influence the decisions of others because they possess authority, knowledge, position, or have a relationship with the public or audience (TEMPO, 2022).

### *Vocabulary*
Vocabulary refers to a set of words owned by an individual or group within a language. It consists of the words and expressions used by an individual or language, which serve as essential vocabulary in communication. The quality of an individual's language skills depends on the quantity and quality of their vocabulary (Tarigan, 2011). The richer our vocabulary, the greater the likelihood that we will be skilled in language. A person's vocabulary can develop over time through reading, listening, and interacting with others in various contexts. According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI), "vocabulary is the treasure of words, encompassing all words used in Indonesian, whether spoken or written." Vocabulary can be classified as standard or non-standard, depending on its use in formal or informal contexts. From this perspective, it can be concluded that vocabulary includes all the words owned by a language or by a speaker or writer (Amalia et al., 2023).

### *New Vocabulary*
New vocabulary refers to a set of words that have recently entered the norms of a language, in this case, the Indonesian language. This term refers to words, phrases, or expressions that previously did not exist or were rarely used in the language. New vocabulary can emerge for various reasons, such as technological advancements, social changes, or the influence of other languages. In the context of Indonesian, new vocabulary usually refers to words that have recently been included in the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI) or the *Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia* (PUEBI). However, in a broader sense, new vocabulary also encompasses terms that are increasingly used in daily conversation or media, even if they have not yet been officially recognized by language authorities (Liputan6, 2024).

*Social Media*

Social media is a digital platform that allows users to create, share, and interact with content. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter have become primary channels for disseminating information, including trends and new vocabulary (Novarizal, 2022). Social media is a type of online media that enables people to participate, share, and easily create content. Some examples of social media include blogs, social networks, wikis, forums, and virtual worlds. Blogs, social networks, and wikis are the most widely used types of social media globally. According to another perspective, social media is online media that facilitates social interaction and uses web-based technology to transform communication into interactive discussions (Afandi, 2019.; Juwita, et al., 2024). According to Antony Mayfield (2008), social media is defined as media that allows users to easily participate, share, and create roles, particularly through blogs, social networks, wikis/online encyclopaedias, virtual forums, and virtual worlds (with avatars/3D characters). Sam Decker also contributed to the definition of social media, describing it as digital content and interaction created by and between individuals (Purbohastuti, 2017).

**RESEARCH METHODS**

This study is qualitative descriptive research with data derived from popular vocabulary on social media influencers in Indonesia. The data collection technique used is the observation method with note-taking. This research employs a literature review and content analysis approach with a qualitative methodology to understand the theories and concepts underlying the phenomenon of new vocabulary dissemination. Content analysis is conducted on social media posts from selected influencers to identify new vocabulary and the year of its emergence. This approach is used to analyse and summarize relevant literature sources that are aligned with the discussed topic. The literature is drawn from journals and academic articles. The data analysis technique follows the Miles and Huberman framework. Stage 1 is document analysis, which involves the process of analysing qualitative data through the collection, reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing from documents relevant to the research. These documents can include written texts (reports, letters, articles), visual documents (photos, videos), or other media. Stage 2 is case study, a qualitative research approach used to deeply understand a specific phenomenon in a real-world context. This approach is particularly suitable for complex situations where the boundaries between the studied phenomenon and its context are not clear.

**DISCUSSION**

The role of influencers in the dissemination of new vocabulary in the digital age is significant and cannot be underestimated. With a large follower base, influencers have the ability to impact various aspects of life, including language. The vocabulary introduced or popularized by influencers not only reflects changes in lifestyle and cultural trends but also depicts the social dynamics evolving among the younger generation. Through various social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Twitter, influencers often introduce new words that are easy to remember and frequently have flexible meanings that are relevant to their audience's experiences. The process of spreading new vocabulary occurs through several highly effective methods. First, influencers utilize creativity in their content,

such as short videos, memes, or interactive stories, to introduce new terms that are easy for their followers to understand. Entertaining, engaging, or life-relevant content tends to go viral more quickly and is readily accepted by the audience. Second, direct interaction with followers, through live broadcasts or Q &A sessions, provides an opportunity for influencers to introduce new terms in a more personal and warm setting. This emotional closeness encourages the audience to adopt the introduced terms more rapidly (Lestari, 2020; Luthfi, et al., 2022).

In the digital age, influencers have evolved into one of the most influential forces in society, especially in the spread of new vocabulary. With followers numbering in the millions, influencers have vast reach and considerable influence in creating trends, including language trends. New vocabulary emerging on social media often stems from the creativity of influencers in producing entertaining, educational content or simply content relevant to their everyday lives. Through videos, memes, or other posts, new terms quickly spread and are adopted by their followers, who then incorporate these terms into their daily conversations (Maulana, et al., 2020; Pujiono, 2021)

An influencer has the power to create new slang trends or popularize certain phrases and vocabulary among teenagers. When influencers consistently use specific language, their followers may be inclined to adopt it in their everyday speech. The content presented by influencers, particularly on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, often utilizes modified language or slang. This impacts the language habits of their followers, especially children and adolescents, who tend to mimic this language style (Wardana & Atiqa Sabardila, 2022). The slang or new vocabulary introduced by influencers can help followers feel part of a specific community, strengthen group identity, and foster a sense of belonging. Moreover, influencers have the ability to convey information quickly, thus helping businesses that use their services to promote products reach their target audience. With many people familiar with the products being promoted, they are more likely to be influenced by the messages conveyed by influencers (Dwiyanto, 2024). The content presented by influencers on social media has a significant influence on the language habits of their followers, especially among children and teenagers. Therefore, it is important to provide adequate linguistic exposure to them so that they master the Indonesian language well. The slang popularized by influencers on social media has a significant impact on society, especially among teenagers. Through the use of this slang, influencers can expand teenagers' vocabulary by introducing new terms, popular phrases, or slang that may not be found in formal language or educational settings (Wardana & Atiqa Sabardila, 2022).

Here are some vocabulary terms popularized by influencers.

Table 1
New Vocabulary by Influencers

| Influencers | Vicabulary | Account Name | Year |
|---|---|---|---|
| Atta Halilintar | *Asyiap* | @attahalilintar | 2018 |
| Ria Ricis | *Tumbang* | @riaricis1795 | 2019 |
| Bintang Emon | *Santuy* | @bintangemon. | 2019 |
| Kiky Saputri | *Endol* | @kikysaputrii | 2020 |

| Anya Geraldine | *Candu* | @anyaselalubisa | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Raditya Dika | *Mager* | @radityadika | 2017 |
| Awkarin | *Anjay* | @awkarin | 2016 |
| Young Lex | *Ngeselin* | @young_lex18 | 2016 |
| Jeje Slebew | *Slebew* | @jeje_slebew. | 2022 |

The word "Asyiap" was popularized by Atta Halilintar in 2018 on the YouTube platform. This word is used as an expression of enthusiasm or agreement that frequently appears in his videos. The word "Tumbang" was popularized by Ria Ricis in 2019 on YouTube. It is commonly used to describe something that fails or falls, in line with her comedic content.

Bintang Emon made the word "Santuy" popular on Instagram and YouTube in 2019. This word is a slang term derived from "santai," which describes a relaxed state. Kiky Saputri is known for the word "Endol," which means something delicious or tasty. This term became popular through TikTok and Instagram in 2020. Anya Geraldine popularized the word "Candu" in 2020 via Instagram and Twitter. This word is used to describe something that is addictive or highly attractive.

The word "Mager" was popularized by Raditya Dika in 2017 on YouTube and Twitter. It is an abbreviation of "malas gerak," which describes a feeling of laziness to move or be active. Awkarin made the word "Anjay" popular in 2016 through YouTube and Instagram. This word is used as an expression of amazement or surprise. Young Lex is known for the word "Ngeselin," which means something or someone that is annoying. This term became popular in 2016 on YouTube and Instagram. Jeje Slebew popularized the word "Slebew" in 2022 on TikTok. It is used as an expression reflecting a lifestyle, freedom, or enjoyment, often used with a humorous or casual tone.

Social media has transformed the way we communicate, with features like comments, hashtags, and direct interactions. These platforms allow new words to spread rapidly. Influencers, as part of this ecosystem, play a central role in creating and spreading new vocabulary (Samodra, 2024; Sanita, 2023; Watie, 2016). They have vast platforms to introduce new words, which are then adopted by their audiences. This largely depends on how creative and relevant the words are to the everyday lives of their followers.

Influencers generate engaging content, such as short videos, memes, vlogs, or podcasts, which often serve as the origin of new terms. They use visual and audio appeal to deliver new vocabulary in an entertaining and memorable way. For example, terms like "Asyiap" (an expression of enthusiasm or agreement) or "Santuy" (relaxing or describing a relaxed state) have become part of daily conversation due to their influence on platforms like TikTok and Instagram. Social media provides influencers the opportunity to interact directly with followers through comment sections, live streaming, or collaborations with other influencers. During these interactions, they often introduce new vocabulary or expressions that followers later use in their everyday conversations. This accelerates the spread of new terms because followers feel a closer, more personal connection with the influencer (Yuliana, 2018; Yulia, et al., 2024). The vocabulary introduced by influencers often becomes a symbol of identity for certain groups. Followers feel a sense of belonging to an exclusive community when using the same terms. In the

youth community or among TikTok enthusiasts, terms like "Gaskeun" (to do something with enthusiasm) or "Sabi" (can) have become popular and are used to signify a sense of camaraderie within that community (Desrina, 2024; Kembuan & Irwansyah, 2019).

**CONCLUSION**

Influencers play a key role in the spread of new vocabulary in the digital age, thanks to their broad audience reach and significant influence on social media. By creating creative content such as videos, memes, and live broadcasts, they frequently introduce new terms that are easy to remember and quickly spread. Vocabulary such as *"Asyiap," "Tumbang," "Santuy," "Endol," "Candu," "Mager," "Anjay," and "Ngeselin"* have gone viral and are used by many, especially among the younger generation. These terms often emphasize social connection and the evolving digital culture. Through direct interactions with followers and with the help of social media algorithms that promote popular content, new vocabulary can spread rapidly. This language not only enriches daily conversations but also creates group identity and strengthens the bond between followers and influencers. However, the presence of these new terms may also lead to a communication gap between the younger generation, familiar with this slang, and older generations who may find it difficult to understand. This indicates that the language trends introduced by influencers often reflect changes in lifestyle as well as the evolving culture among the younger generation. Overall, influencers play a crucial role in shaping language trends and providing insights into how digital culture influences the way we communicate in an ever-evolving technological era. Therefore, their role in the evolution of language is highly significant, as these new terms not only become part of everyday conversations but also serve as symbols of identity in the broader digital society.

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