Word-Formation Strategies of Contemporary Slang: A Case Study on NIKI's *Nicole* Album

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Abstract

This study discusses the word-formation processes of slang words found in selected songs from NIKI's Nicole album, there are Backburner, Take A Chance with Me, and High School in Jakarta. The study aims to: (1) analyze the types of slang word-formation processes based on George Yule's theory used in the selected songs, (2) analyze the meanings of the slang words, and (3) identify the most dominant word-formation process used in the lyrics. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method using observation as the data collection method and a distributional method for data analysis. The theories applied in this research are George Yule's (2006) theory of word formation and Geoffrey Leech's theory of meaning. The results of the analysis reveal five types of word-formation processes: compounding, derivation, clipping, conversion, and coinage. Among these processes, compounding becomes the most dominant, occurring 44 times, with forms such as backburner, high school, and love-hate. Derivation ranks second with 20 occurrences, followed by clipping with 11 occurrences, while conversion and coinage appear 5 and 2 times respectively. The findings indicate that the lyrics strongly utilize compact, expressive, and informal linguistic forms to convey emotional meaning and support rhythmic effectiveness in musical discourse. Furthermore, the analysis of meaning shows that slang expressions in the songs reflect conversational language, emotional intimacy, and contemporary youth expression. This study highlights how word-formation processes and semantic meaning contribute to the stylistic and artistic characteristics of contemporary song lyrics.

Keywords: Word-formation, Slang, Niki, Nicole Album

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a vital role in human life because it is a means of communication used by people to convey a wide range of things—from thoughts and feelings to information—to individuals or groups. Etymologically, the word 'language' derives from the Sanskrit term 'भाषा' (bhāṣā), which encompasses sound, movement and expression. In daily life, language enables humans to interact in social, educational, cultural, and other aspects of life. Thus, language is used in most human activities, such as expressing feelings, conveying desires, and offering advice and opinions. The higher a person's level of language proficiency, the more effective their use of language in communication (Arnianti, 2019). People also differ in how they express themselves; some prefer to speak directly, whilst others prefer to do so in writing. Language also evolves in

line with the social and cultural dynamics occurring within society. Therefore, language is not static, but rather constantly changes in accordance with the times and the communicative needs of its users.

Sociolinguistics examines how language is used in social interactions. It is the study of how various social characteristics, such as ethnicity, gender, age and socio-economic class, influence language use and, in turn, how language use reflects and reinforces social norms and expectations. Sociolinguistics plays a vital role in the study of communication and interaction. Sociolinguistics is an essential introductory text for all sociolinguistics students and a fantastic resource for the study of English, linguistics, and applied linguistics. Sociolinguistics can examine how the language practices of one community differ from those of another (Wardhaugh, 1993)**.** We can examine the relationship within a specific community between language use and social categories. There are various possible relationships between language and society: 1) Social structures may influence or determine linguistic structures and/or behavior. 2) Directly contrary to the first: Linguistic structure and/or behavior can influence or determine social structure. 3) The influence is bidirectional: Language and society can influence one another. 4) There is no relationship whatsoever between linguistic structure and/or behavior and social structure, and each is independent of the other.

Globalization and technological advancements have had a significant impact on cultures across the globe, altering the ways in which people interact, consume culture, and even shape their identities. Millennials and Generation Z, having grown up in the digital age, have embraced social media as a new means of communication and self-expression (Anita Candra Dewi, 2025). Social media has created a space for the emergence of various new forms of language that often deviate from the standard conventions used in formal communication. Communication is no longer limited to mere text but involves visual elements that enrich linguistic expression. This phenomenon encompasses the use of slang, abbreviations, emoticons, and other informal linguistic styles that have become characteristic of online communication. Therefore, it is important to understand how language can adapt on social media.

In a linguistic context, slang is recognized as a language variety that develops within specific social groups and often reflects the identity of those groups. Slang has unique characteristics: it is flexible, dynamic, and often deviates from formal linguistic rules (Fajriani Fitri, 2025). Slang is a form of informal language variation used within specific social groups as a marker of closeness, exclusivity, group identity, or a form of creative expression that sometimes deviates from standard language. Slang plays a vital role in conveying expression, fostering social interaction, and reinforcing the group identity of its users on social media. The use of slang introduces new words and is one way of describing new terms that can enrich the language itself. The formation of slang and everyday language occurs through several processes. Linguistically, these processes are known as word-formation processes.

The process of word formation encompasses both slang and common words. This process may involve the transfer of existing words to new uses without altering their meaning, or it may involve the creation of entirely new words. Colloquial language involves several processes in word formation. As stated by (Nuha Nur Syahidah, 2024; Yule, 2023), word formation can be achieved through: Coinage, Compounding, Clipping, Blending, Borrowing, Back-formation, Acronyms, Multiple processes, and Affixes (Prefixes, Infixes, Suffixes).

Etymology

Etymology is the study of a word's origins and history, as well as the various ways in which new words can be introduced into a language. It is a process that often requires a significant amount of time before these terms evolve into the everyday vocabulary we use today (Nuha Nur Syahidah, 2024; Yule, 2023). A classic example of this is the term "salary," which is derived from the Latin salarium, historically referred to as "salt money." In ancient times, salt was a highly valued commodity known as "white gold" and was used as a direct form of payment for labourers; this historical root remains embedded in our modern language as a term for worker compensation.

Coinage

Coinage refers to the creation of entirely brand-new words that eventually become standard terms in daily language, often originating from invented trade names for commercial products (Nuha Nur Syahidah, 2024; Yule, 2023). In this process, specific brand names are typically adopted as common nouns to describe an entire category of goods. Familiar examples include aspirin, zipper, and Tylenol. In the digital age, Google has become the definitive common term for the act of searching the internet, frequently used in casual requests such as, "Can you google it for me?".

Borrowing

Borrowing is a method that produces new words by taking them from another language and incorporating them into one's own (Carlos et al., 2020). This process effectively displaces or supplements existing vocabulary by adopting terms from foreign sources that eventually become common English words. For instance, the English term "lilac" is a loanword from Persian. Today, "lilac" is used in daily conversation to refer to a specific pale violet colour or a type of beautiful flower, demonstrating how borrowed terms seamlessly integrate into the English lexicon.

Compounding

Compounding involves the process of combining two or more independent words to create a single, new form with a more complex meaning (Nuha Nur Syahidah, 2024; Yule, 2023). This technique creates new vocabulary comprising two distinct elements, where the first is typically a root or a word, and the second is also a root or word that modifies the overall concept. A clear example is the term "blackberry," which joins the adjective black with the noun berry. Similarly,

the word "skateboard" combines skate and board to form a single noun representing a specific object.

Blending

Blending is a creative process where two words are merged to form a new term, typically by joining the beginning of one word with the ending of another (Nuha Nur Syahidah, 2024; Yule, 2023). According to (Mattiello, 2008), this is achieved by joining the "tails" or "heads" of two words to produce a hybrid meaning. For example, the words modulator and demodulator were blended to create the technical term modem. In a more modern context, the word vlog is a blend of video and blog, neatly combining the two concepts into one concise term.

Clipping

Clipping is the process of forming new words—often slang—by shortening existing words that have more than one syllable (Nuha Nur Syahidah, 2024; Yule, 2023). This occurs frequently in informal speech where a word is reduced to a shorter form by cutting off either the beginning or the end. For example, the term "advertisement" is commonly clipped to "ad," and the academic term "examination" is almost universally shortened to "exam" in casual conversation, making communication more efficient.

Backformation

Backformation is a technical process that changes a word from one type to another, usually by reducing a noun to a verb (Nuha Nur Syahidah, 2024; Yule, 2023). It creates shorter words by deleting real or imagined affixes from longer words, essentially recreating a base word that did not previously exist through analogy. For instance, the verb "confess" was formed back from the noun confessor, and the verb "emote" was created by removing the suffix from the noun emotion.

Conversion

Conversion refers to a shift in a word's function, such as when a noun begins to serve as a verb without any physical reduction or change to the word itself (Nuha Nur Syahidah, 2024; Yule, 2023). Often called a "category change" or "functional shift," this process allows words like bridge, bottle, and vacation to be used as verbs (e.g., "She bottled the jam"). Conversely, verbs can become nouns, such as in the phrase "making a run for it," where the verb run is used as a noun.

Acronyms

Acronyms are new words formed from the initial letters of a set of existing words. Unlike simple abbreviations, they are often pronounced as a single word rather than as independent letters (Nuha Nur Syahidah, 2024; Yule, 2023). Acronyms can be written in both capital and lowercase letters and serve as useful shorthand. Examples include LOMY (love of my life) and TGIF (Thank God it’s Friday), both of which condense a full phrase into a punchy, pronounceable term.

Derivation

Derivation is the most common word-formation process, achieved by adding small "bits" known as affixes to a base word (Nuha Nur Syahidah, 2024; Yule, 2023). These include prefixes added to the start (e.g., un- in "uncool"), suffixes added to the end (e.g., -ed in "pissed"), and prefixes or infixes incorporated inside the word. Infixes are particularly rare in English and are often used by emotionally aroused people in aggravating circumstances, such as the exclamation "Abso-bloody-lutely."

Multiple processes

Multiple processes occur when a single word is created using more than one of the word-formation methods mentioned above (Nuha Nur Syahidah, 2024; Yule, 2023). Many slang terms are the result of several layers of change. A prime example is the term "waspish," which originates from the acronym WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant). The word lost its capital letters (becoming a common noun) and then gained the suffix -ish, meaning it underwent both acronymy and derivation to reach its final form.

Slang terms can also be found in literary works, such as films and song lyrics, to convey a message quickly, rhythmically and aesthetically. Films and songs are usually created as a medium to represent social conditions and a person's identity. Slang is often found in the songs of modern young people, especially in NIKI's songs on her album Nicole. In its application, contemporary slang can be found in the conversations of teenagers and young people. Nicole Zefanya, known professionally as NIKI, is an Indonesian singer-songwriter and record producer based in the United States under the label 88rising. And she is a Gen Z, she Starting her career on YouTube and opening for Taylor Swift in Jakarta at the age of 15, she made history as the first Indonesian female singer to perform at Coachella. The album Nicole (2022), the subject of your research, is a deeply personal coming-of-age work; it features re-recordings of songs she wrote during her high school years in Jakarta, making it a rich source of slang and typical teenage colloquialisms. Musically, NIKI has evolved from her early indie-folk roots to modern R&B on the EP Zephyr, and back to her narrative pop-folk roots on the album Nicole. Her contributions to the Marvel film Shang-Chi soundtrack and the success of songs like "High School in Jakarta" have cemented her position as a global pop icon representing youth identity. Her educational background in international schools and her experience moving to the United States have given her lyrics a unique linguistic influence, where creative word formation is often used to express memories, nostalgia, and complex emotions.

According to (Leech, 1981; Yunira et al., 2020) meaning can be learned as a linguistic phenomenon itself, not as something outside of language. However, the scope of linguistics that studies about meaning does not only consist of one field of science. According to Leech, there are only seven types of meaning. Meaning plays an important role in understanding what is communicated. As such, there are seven types of meaning, and they contribute a lot to the semantic

field. The study of meaning is a new field of this century, in the future; This field of study will advance and will have a lot of value in the analysis of meaning in the field of linguistics. In general, it is classified into seven types of meaning in which five of them are identified as associative meanings. Seven types of meanings are conceptual meanings, thematic meanings, and associative meanings; connotative meaning, style meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, and collocative meaning. The definition of associative meaning is unstable in meaning and has individual experience variants. The associative meaning of expressions is related to the mental understanding of the individual speaker. They can be broken down into five subtypes, e.g. connotative, style, affective, reflected, and collocative meaning (Leech, 1974; Yunira et al., 2020).

So, in this research, the researcher will analyze the slang words found in selected songs on NIKI's *Nicole* album, which are "Backburner," "Take A Chance with Me," and "High School in Jakarta." The reason is that the NIKI songs contain many slang words, and sometimes the listeners cannot understand the meaning of the slang words in the song, making them not get the message of the lyrics. So, based on the explanation above, this research aims to analyze: 1) the types of word formation of slang words based on Yule's theory utilized in selected songs from NIKI's *Nicole* album, which are "Backburner," "Take A Chance with Me," and "High School in Jakarta," 2) analyze the meaning of the slang words, and 3) identify the most dominant word-formation process used in the lyrics.

Several previous studies have examined the use of slang in song lyrics from different perspectives. The first study, conducted by (Ovalili et al., 2024), analyzes slang expressions in Anne-Marie's song lyrics. The findings reveal 17 instances of slang, with primary slang being overwhelmingly dominant (16 instances). In terms of meaning, conceptual meaning is identified as the most frequent category, based on the frameworks proposed by Kipfer and Chapman as well as Leech. The second study, carried out by (Ewik Wiartati et al., 2022), investigates slang usage in Megan Thee Stallion's album Tina Snow from a sociolinguistic perspective. The study identifies both primary and secondary slang following Kipfer and Chapman's (2007) classification. In addition, it examines various word-formation processes, including compounding, conversion, acronyms, blending, and clipping, based on Mattiello's (2008) theory. The results, derived through descriptive qualitative analysis, indicate that these processes are prominently used in the lyrics. The third study, conducted by (Karmila Dewi & Ayu Widiastuti, 2020), compares slang usage across three songs from different musical genres: That's What I Like (pop), Smoke on the Water (rock), and Ch-Check It Out (rap). Using documentary and qualitative methods, the study applies Partridge's (2004) theory of slang types and Leech's (1974) theory of meaning. The findings show six types of slang, with society slang being the most dominant, and six types of meaning, with collocative meaning emerging as the most frequently used.

Although these previous studies contribute significantly to the analysis of slang and word-formation processes, several gaps still remain. The previous studies mainly focus on identifying types of slang, their meanings, and general word-formation processes in song lyrics or literary works. However, they provide limited discussion on how specific word-formation strategies,

particularly compounding and derivation, function stylistically and emotionally in contemporary pop song lyrics such as those found in NIKI's Nicole album. In addition, the previous studies rarely emphasize the relationship between morphological processes and semantic meaning simultaneously through both morphological and semantic approaches.

This study attempts to fill those gaps by combining George Yule's theory of word formation and Geoffrey N. Leech's theory of meaning to analyze slang words in selected songs from NIKI's Nicole album. Furthermore, this study applies a distributional method to provide a more systematic structural analysis of the data. The researcher believes that this study can contribute positively to students and readers by helping them identify slang expressions used in song lyrics, understand their meanings, and recognize the morphological processes involved in their formation. Through this analysis, students can gain both entertainment and linguistic knowledge from contemporary songs.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative-descriptive method because the data taken from the selected songs in NIKI's *Nicole* Album, namely "Backburner," "Take A Chance with Me," and "High School in Jakarta" which is consists of words, phrases, and sentences rather than numerical values. According to (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) qualitative research is an approach to exploring and understanding the meanings that individuals or groups attribute to a social or humanitarian issue. The research process involves developing questions and procedures, collecting data typically on participants' backgrounds, analyzing the data inductively from specifics to general themes, and interpreting the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those involved in this form of inquiry support a research perspective that respects and is grounded in an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of reporting the complexity of a situation. This study also uses observation as a method of data collection. While, in analyzing the data, the researcher uses distributional methods by Sudaryanto (Friska Amelia Novrianti, Dyah Kristyowati, et al., 2025; Sudaryanto, 1993) to analyze the data. There are some steps in analyzing the data as mentioned. First, Categorizing the collected slang words in selected songs from NIKI's album based on Yule Theory. Second, Finding the most dominant slang word. Third, make a conclusion about the finding of this research.

FINDINGS

After analyzing the types of word-formation of slang word, the research findings show that in the selected tracks from NIKI's album *Nicole*, which are "Backburner", "Take A Chance with Me" and "High School in Jakarta"—there are 82 slang words featured in these songs. There are also five types of word formation in the selected songs from NIKI's album Nicole: Clipping, Compounding, Derivation, Conversion and Coinage. Compounding is the dominant word formation method, appearing 44 times, followed by Derivation 20 times, Clipping 11 times, Conversion five times, and Coinage twice. The following table shows the results:

Table 1 Analysis of Slang Words in NIKI's Song "Backburner"

Num	Types Word Formation	Slang Word	Meaning of Slang Word	Line Slang	Token
	Clipping	Burnin'	Shortened from the original word 'burning,' which means feeling intense emotional pain or passion.	44	1
		f-	Shortened from the original word 'fucking.'	13	1
		'Cause	Shortened from the original word 'because,' means reason.	37,44	2
		'til	Shortened from the original word 'until,' means time limit.	44	1
	Total				5
	Compounding	Backburner	The combination of two words, back + burner, which means treated as a second option.		15
		Fast Learner	The combination of two words, fast + learner, which means someone expected to learn quickly.	16, 38	2
		Hurt Puppy	The combination of two words, hurt + puppy, which means a person who appears emotionally vulnerable to gain sympathy.	25	1
		Wandering eyes	The combination of two words, wandering + eyes, which means the tendency to be attracted to others despite being in a relationship	41	1
	Total				19
	Derivation	Calling (suffix -ing)	Means ongoing act of reaching out.	1	1
		Sounding (suffix -ing)	Means how someone appears emotionally through voice.	25	1
		Romantic (suffix -ic)	Means idealized emotional perception of love.	15	1
		Finally (suffix -ly)	Means after a long emotional process.	37	1
		Bleeding (suffix -ing)	Means emotional pain or inner hurt.	40	1
		Stalling (suffix -ing)	Means delaying action or avoiding truth.	2	1

		Talking (suffix -ing)	Means ongoing emotional interaction	3	1
	Total				7
	Conversion	Call	A change in part of speech from a noun to a verb, which means not just making a phone call but seeking attention.	27	1
	Total				1
	Coinage	The Goo Goo Dolls	It refers to Goo Goo Dolls, a highly successful American alternative rock band formed in 1985 in Buffalo, New York.	10	1
	Total				1
	Total Data				33

Table 2 Analysis of Slang Words in NIKI's Song "Take A Chance with Me"

Num	Types Word Formation	Slang Word	Meaning of Slang Word	Line Slang	Token
	Clipping	Uncoverin'	Shortened from the original word 'uncovering,' means expressing hidden thoughts or feelings.	6	1
		Surgin'	Shortened from the original word 'surging,' which means increased intense emotion or energy.	23	1
		Pulsin'	Shortened from the original word 'pulsing,' which means strong and rhythmic emotional feelings.	37	1
	Total				3
	Compounding	Dandelion Fluff	The combination of two words, dandelion + fluff, which means a feeling that is fragile and fleeting.	4	1
		Sunlight	The combination of two words, sun + light, which means a warm and positive emotional atmosphere.	4	1
		Polar Opposites	The combination of two words, polar + opposites, which means very different personalities.	13	1
		Safety Net	The combination of two words, safety + net, which means emotional support or support system.	35	1

		Dead in the Eye	The combination of two words, dead + eyes, which means a blank or unfocused gaze.	25	1
	Total				5
	Derivation	Intangible (prefix in- + suffix -ible)	which means a feeling that is hard to describe.	3	1
		Faster (suffix -er)	which means a growing change.	3	1
		Clueless (suffix -less)	which means someone who is unaware of other people's feelings.	14	1
		Hopelessly (suffix -less, -ly)	which means a love with no chance of success.	26	1
		Overrated (prefix over- + suffix -ed)	which means that love isn't as wonderful as one might imagine.	27	1
		Electricity (suffix -ity)	which is a metaphor for strong attraction or chemistry.	23	1
	Total				6
	Conversion	Color	A change in part of speech from a noun to a verb, which means to affect or influence something emotionally.	2	1
		Read	the expansion of meaning through usage, which means which means understanding someone deeply.	14	1
	Total				2
	Total Data				16

Table 3 Analysis of Slang Words in NIKI's Song "High School in Jakarta"

Num	Types Word Formation	Slang Word	Meaning of Slang Word	Line Slang	Token
	Clipping	'cause	Shortened from the original word 'because,' means reason.	4,28	2
		'til	Shortened from the original word 'until,' means time limit.	12	1
	Total				3
	Compounding	High School	The combination of two words, high + school, which refers to the teenage years.	30	9

	Halloween Night	The combination of two words, halloween + night, means a memorable romantic moment.	4	1
	Group Assignment	The combination of two words, group + assignment, which means a joint academic assignment.	22	1
	Love-hate	The combination of two words, love + hate, which means ambivalent emotions.		2
	Heart Attack	The combination of two words, heart + attack, which means an intense emotional reaction.	10	1
	U-turns	The combination of two words, U + turns, which means a sudden change of direction.	12	1
	Tight-lipped	The combination of two words, tight + lipped, which means emotionally closed off or withdrawn.	15,32	2
	Suburban Armadas	The combination of two words, suburban + armadas, which means influential social groups of teenagers.	14	1
	Comedy Drama	The combination of two words, comedy + drama, which means a relationship full of humor and conflict.	34	1
	American Summer	The combination of two words, American + summer, which means an idealized experience of youth.	47	1
Total				20
Derivation	Moving (suffix -ing)	which means a change in life, whether it be moving to a new place or entering a new phase of life.	39	1
	Bleached (suffix -ed)	which means the physical process of bleaching hair.	5	1
	Unstable (prefix un-)	which means a person's unstable emotional state.	24	1
	Harder (suffix -er)	which means increasing intensity.	33	1
	Smarter (suffix -er)	which means self-reflection; it can take the form of regret or hope.	35	1

	Older (suffix -er)	which means development in terms of age and maturity.	28,29	2
Total				7
Conversion	Text	A change in part of speech from a noun to a verb, which means sending a message via the phone.	23	1
	Call	A change in part of speech from a noun to a verb, which refers to contacting someone (especially by telephone).	23	1
Total				2
Coinage	Vespa	It refers to brands of scooter, The word "Vespa" means "wasp" in Italian. When Enrico Piaggio saw the first prototype (designed by aeronautical engineer Corradino D'Ascanio), he reportedly exclaimed, "Sembra una vespa!" ("It looks like a wasp!").	5	1
Total				1
Total data				33

DISCUSSION

In conclusion, based on the data above, there are five types of slang word formation in selected songs from NIKI's album *Nicole*, which are "Backburner", "Take A Chance with Me" and "High School in Jakarta." These are clipping, compounding, derivation, conversion and coinage. The results are shown in the table below.

Table 4 Word-formations of Slang in selected songs from NIKI's Nicole Album

Songs	Clipping	Compounding	Derivation	Conversion	Coinage
Backburner	5	19	7	1	1
Take A Chance with Me	3	5	6	2	
High School in Jakarta	3	20	7	2	1
Total	11	44	20	5	2

Based on the findings, compounding emerges as the most dominant word-formation process in NIKI's Nicole album, appearing 44 times in total. According to Yule (2023), compounding is a process in which two separate lexical items are combined to produce a single expression with a distinct meaning. In this study, compounds such as backburner, high school, love-hate, and tight-lipped demonstrate how multiple lexical units can function as unified semantic expressions. Among these forms, backburner appears most frequently, indicating its significance within the lyrical narrative of the album. Yule explains that compounding is one of the most productive processes in English morphology because it allows speakers and writers to create more specific and expressive meanings efficiently. This theoretical perspective aligns with the characteristics of song lyrics, where compact and emotionally loaded expressions are often preferred. The frequent use of compounds in NIKI's lyrics suggests that compounding functions not only as a morphological strategy but also as a stylistic device to intensify imagery, emotion, and thematic expression.

The second most dominant process is derivation, with 20 occurrences. Based on Yule's theory, derivation involves the addition of prefixes or suffixes to a root word in order to create a new lexical form or grammatical category. Words such as hopelessly, unstable, smarter, and older illustrate how derivational affixes modify meaning and grammatical function. The presence of these forms indicates that derivation contributes to the expressive and descriptive quality of the lyrics by allowing nuanced emotional and conceptual expressions.The next process identified is clipping, which appears 11 times. According to Yule, clipping refers to the shortening of a word without changing its original meaning. Examples found in this study include 'cause, 'til, burnin', and uncoverin'. These clipped forms reflect informal spoken language and contribute to the rhythmic and musical qualities of the songs. In lyrical discourse, clipping also helps maintain syllabic balance and natural pronunciation patterns.

Meanwhile, conversion and coinage are the least frequent processes. Yule defines conversion as a process in which a word changes its grammatical category without undergoing morphological alteration. Examples such as call, text, and read demonstrate this phenomenon. Coinage, on the other hand, refers to the creation or adoption of entirely new lexical items, often originating from proper names or brands. In this study, The Goo Goo Dolls and Vespa represent examples of coinage. Although these processes occur less frequently, they still contribute to the creativity and modern linguistic style of the lyrics.

These findings show similarities and differences when compared to previous studies. First, the dominance of compounding partially aligns with the study conducted on Red, White & Royal Blue, which also identifies compounding and derivation as productive word-formation processes (Friska Amelia Novrianti, Resty Widya Kurniasari, et al., 2025). From Yule's perspective, this similarity indicates that compounding is widely used across different forms of contemporary discourse because it effectively creates concise yet meaningful expressions. However, while the previous

study focuses on slang in literary narratives, the current study demonstrates that compounding also plays an important role in constructing emotional and poetic imagery in song lyrics.

The present findings also differ from the study on Travis Scott's Astroworld album, which identifies clipping as the dominant process (Gabrielle Sarah Maria Tanamal et al., 2020). According to Yule's theory, clipping is strongly associated with informal spoken language and phonological simplification. The difference in findings may be influenced by genre variation, as hip-hop lyrics tend to prioritize rhythmic compression and shortened pronunciation, whereas pop and alternative pop lyrics, such as those in Nicole, rely more heavily on compounds to convey emotional complexity and thematic depth. In addition, this study differs from the research on Billie Eilish's album, where blending was found to be the dominant process (Annisa Rahmasari & Dina Meiolina, 2021). Unlike that study, the present research identifies compounding as the most frequent process after reevaluating the data based on Yule's original classification of word-formation processes. This suggests that the linguistic characteristics of song lyrics may vary depending on both theoretical interpretation and musical style.

Overall, the findings support Yule's theory that word-formation processes are closely related to communicative efficiency, creativity, and stylistic needs. In NIKI's Nicole album, compounding becomes the dominant strategy because it effectively conveys emotional nuance, vivid imagery, and expressive meaning within contemporary song lyrics.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the word-formation processes of slang words found in selected songs from NIKI's Nicole album, namely Backburner, Take A Chance with Me, and High School in Jakarta. Based on the analysis, five types of word-formation processes were identified: compounding, derivation, clipping, conversion, and coinage. Among these processes, compounding becomes the most dominant, with 44 occurrences. The findings support George Yule's (2023) theory, which explains that word-formation processes are important strategies in creating new meanings and expressions in language. In this study, compounding and derivation are shown to contribute significantly to the emotional and stylistic qualities of the songs. Meanwhile, clipping reflects the informal and conversational style commonly found in song lyrics, especially in contemporary popular music.

Compared to previous studies, this research shows both similarities and differences. Similar to earlier studies, this study also finds that slang and word-formation processes play an important role in shaping meaning and style in song lyrics. However, unlike some previous studies that identify blending or clipping as the dominant process, this study finds that compounding is the most frequently used process in NIKI's Nicole album. This difference may be influenced by musical genre, lyrical style, and the theoretical classification used in the analysis.

Overall, this study demonstrates that word-formation processes are not only linguistic phenomena but also stylistic tools used to convey emotions, imagery, and personal expression in song lyrics. The researcher hopes that this study can help readers and students better understand slang words, their meanings, and the morphological processes involved in their formation. Future researchers are encouraged to explore word-formation processes in different artists, genres, or media in order to gain broader insights into the development of contemporary slang language.

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