

# Gaming Language as a Language Variations in Digital Humanities

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**Abstract.** This study examined the language used by players in the online game Valorant. Gaming language develops massively as a digital way of living. In digital humanities, variation in virtual communication needs to be considered an essential milestone in language development. This study investigated in specific the use of slang, which identified a particular community. There were two goals of this study first, to determine the slang words used by players during the game, and second to examine the function of these slang words. Data for this study were collected during one month of the consecutive game, including screenshots and recording of sessions. Results showed four categories of slang words used by Valorant players, with acronyms and clippings used more frequently (42,50% for each category) than other slang words. Players used these slang words to convey emotional and tactical messages. These functions were identified, including disapproval, criticism, support, and praises. It was concluded that the new slang words showed language used in gaming as a phenomenon in digital humanities. Implications for future research were also discussed for further development of digital culture and digital humanities.

## 1 Introduction

Communication in digital humanities is essential because it can trigger significant developments in many aspects of life. The nature of gaming as a digital culture has changed throughout time. Gaming used to be something people did to pass the time, but today it can be used to compete in tournaments or even make a living as a streamer on a platform. Gaming impacts language as well, such as the way new words and their meanings are introduced into the language. The digital humanities may be defined as an academic field concerned with transmitting knowledge through communication channels.

Communication is the exchange of messages as data or ideas between a message sender, referred to as a communicator, and the message recipient, referred to as the communicant, either directly or implicitly via media. Communication is very effective in public action; communication aims to provide others with expanded knowledge, to stimulate thinking, and to pass on discernments. While delivering a message, you should have the choice of speaking and where the meaning of each word you say should be evident to others. An excellent communicator can position himself in response to natural circumstances or persons in their immediate vicinity. Without a doubt, communication cannot be coordinated with the manner in which each person is addressed. Thus, the layout is supposed to aid the communicator in conveying their objectives to the other individual in a more efficient manner.

Slang is a common term or phrase that is often used in communication between friends or people who are familiar with one another [1]. Slang is unsuitable and inappropriate for formal situations and is generally not used in proper communication; moreover, slang is only used in informal conversation and is not acceptable in academic works. Even though slang is not taught in schools or universities since schools and universities emphasize formal language, slang does not make its reality authentic; yet it is generally acknowledged among young people. Because the use of slang is expanding faster than ordinary English, research on slang is substantially more interesting to do. It provides justifications and justifications for proceeding and encourages analysis of terminology. Due to the predominance of slang, the designer was intrigued to decipher the slang terms used in the chat section of the online first-person-shooter game Valorant.

Several previous research has been reviewed for this research opportunity. The researcher attempts this to compare similar studies and find out the research. The first previous research reviewed by [2] used a qualitative approach to find out the types of slang language are used in social media by English Department Students of Universitas Pancasakti Tegal. The study also attempted to find out the reasons for using slang language. The second previous research is research that analyzes slang words produced by the community in the WhatsApp group by [3]. This previous research tried to find the kind of slang words used by the Indonesian Hunters English Club member on the WhatsApp group social

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media based on Allan and Burrige's theory. Compared to these two studies, this research also used the descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data. Furthermore, both previous researchs used social media to analyze the slang language. However, this research has a different object which is using an Online game as an object. Additionally, the research data collection is also quite different from the two previous research. In this research, the data collection is a real-time observation of language instead of collecting language usage in use in the social media domain.

This study aims to determine the frequency with which certain kinds of slang phrases are used in the game chat feature of the Online First-Person Shooting Game Valorant. Additionally, the study will be restricted to Valorant users that utilize the chat feature. Moreover, the author conducted this study to accomplish the research's objective and purpose and show that online gaming does not only deal with the game but in the game brings together many people, thus forming a new language phenomenon in online games. Besides, slang in the Online First-Person Shooting Valorant can deliver an information efficiently and building a trust to win the game. Many earlier studies were related to this research issue, although the majority of them utilized this topic to evaluate slang in social media and films. It enables individuals to understand how slang phrases are used in the online First Person Shooter Valorant and provides insight into how slang words may be examined using different theories. This study will concentrate on the analysis of slang terms used in the chat feature of the Online First-Person Shooting Game Valorant.

### 1.1 Objectives

The author developed two problem formulations for this study based on the subject. The two problem formulations are as follows:

1. What slang terms do Valorant players use while chatting through in-game chat?
2. What functions do Valorant players utilize slang language while chatting through in-game chat?

## 2 Literature Review

A game is a systematic kind of play that is generally conducted for pleasure or enjoyment; however, it may also be utilized as an instructional tool in some instances [4]. Games are sometimes played only for fun, and other times for accomplishment or cash reward. They may be played alone, in groups, or online by amateurs and professional athletes. Furthermore, online gaming is a popular pastime enjoyed by people of all ages and genders worldwide, and it is prevalent among teenagers [5]. Playing online games can also have a good influence and a bad influence on people. The amount of research being done on the negative impacts of gaming has risen (). The result is that several potentially harmful characteristics of online gaming have been identified. These include decreased social skills and aggressiveness, decreased family connection, and

disruption of a person's employment and education [6]. Besides, multiple research projects have been conducted on the harmful effects of problematic and addicted online game playing on several cognitive functions, most notably decision-making and inhibition as well as the sense of time over several seconds [7].

The first first-person shooter (FPS) game that has been documented was released in 1973 [8]. First-person shooter games are intended to draw players into violent virtual actions on a more personal level. First-person shooter games have developed into multiplayer online first-person shooter (MMOFPS) games. In recent years, the rise of online gaming content production, online game broadcasting, and e-sports have transformed MMOFPS from a recreational activity into a potentially profitable long-term vocation.

Gaming as a method of learning is a pedagogical technique that involves the use of video games in educational settings, and students can get immersed in instructional content and topics in a dynamic, entertaining, and fun manner because of the motivating psychology that is involved in game-based learning [9]. Gaming as a method of learning is more than just creating games for students to play; it is also generating interactive learning activities that may progressively impart ideas and direct students towards a final objective [10]. Gaming as learning method may be defined as a teaching approach that enables students to explore various aspects of games as a form of learning to help them improve their set of abilities or reach particular learning objectives. It can be defined as follows: For all of these reasons, the design of instructional software to be used in schools should be created, and based on game design approaches and techniques is quickly gaining favor among those working in the field of educational technology.

Gamification refers to the technique of incorporating games into the learning process. Online learning is less successful during a pandemic, and this gamification method encourages students to become more engaged in their studies at that time. Other than acting as media for recreation and passing time, game can also be used as a media to teach and learn. This process of teaching and learning through the game is known as gamification. The term gamification in this research refers to the instructive strategy and approach of combining amusement plans & components with learning strategies to motivate the understudies & impact their conduct. This approach centers on an engagement with students to extend their intrigued and inspiration for examining by making it a fun and engaging preparation. Both learning and playing have a few comparable components in which they both require time to memorize and are a fulfilling handle for the members. In gaming, the accomplishment & remunerate change, but it gives the members a sense of accomplishment, whereas in examining, the achievement is much more concrete in the form of scores [11].

A Language is a tool used to communicate with others to express ideas and feelings. Language is often used to debate a subject or convey information from one society to another. Language is a system that humans use to communicate with one another. Language is

constantly evolving due to social situations and individual needs [12]. Additionally, language is spoken by everyone in the world, and it may evolve through time based on the needs of the people who use it. Standard and non-standard forms of language exist. Language diversity is possible depending on one's social position, low or high, which often uses formal or casual language [13]. Additionally, slang refers to the linguistic diversity that exists.

Pragmatics is the study of structural language that is used in communication between gamers and other players. By knowing the contextual background, pragmatics can see the relation of language within a topic [14]. The context referred to in pragmatics focuses on the meaning of the word in communication and how gamers convey information to other players. The definition gamers give in contact depends on the knowledge assumed to exist in other players and gamers. In Pragmatics, Slang is considered a dialect of the English language used in casual conversation and by teens as well. Slang refers to the words and phrases used in everyday conversation between teens and another group [1]. Slang is often used by those who are already acquainted or by those who want to increase the intimacy of their connection. Additionally, slang demonstrates the notion of grouping (i.e., categories of slang).

Categories of slang words are arranged into five different categories i.e., the creative and fresh category, imitative category, flippant category, clipping category, and acronym category [12]. First is the Imitative Category, based on the Standard English (SE) word, which is formed by merging two different words and conveying a various meaning. One such example is the term "going to," which is derived from two other words: "going to" and "going to" [15]. Second, Creative and Fresh Category, the creative and fresh category refers to slang speech that demonstrates flair, inventiveness, novel language, casual variation, brand-new terms, and unfamiliar terminology [15]. A guy is an example of this slang term. The term "dude" (noun) refers to an individual man or a guy. The third is the flippant category, which comprises a collection of words that do not interact with expressions of substantial significance. For example, if you say, "calm down a notch," this indicates "take things slowly. Fourth, Clipping Category which is a term that refers to the process of reducing the length of words while maintaining their meaning. For example, the term "ad" refers to "advertisement," and is often used in casual discussion but is unacceptable in official conversation [16]. Lastly, an Acronym Category is a word formed by taking each word's first of first letter and grouping them to create a group combination. An example of an acronym is ASAP, which stands for as soon as possible. On the other hand, functions of slang words are arranged into seven different functions i.e., to address, to initiate relax conversation, to humiliate, to form an intimate atmosphere, to express impression, to reveal anger, and to show intimacy [2].

Previous research is an attempt by researchers to find comparisons and then find new inspiration for further research. First previous research by [2] titled "A Descriptive Study on Slang Language on Social Media

Used by English Department Student of Universitas Pancasakti Tegal." This research uses a qualitative method. The research tries to find the types of slang language used in social media by English Department Students of Universitas Pancasakti Tegal and find out the reasons for using slang language. The second previous research analyzes slang words produced by the community in the WhatsApp group by [3]. This previous research tried to find the type of slang words used by the Indonesian Hunters English Club member on the WhatsApp group social media based on Allan and Burridge's theory. The writer found five categories of slang words, and the dominant type is the imitative type. The author uses the descriptive qualitative method. The previous research and this research have different objects, and this research uses an Online game as an object. However, the previous research used social media as an object.

A game is a systematic kind of play made for pleasure, as an instructional tool, for accomplishment, or as a cash reward that can have a good and bad influence on people. Gaming as a method of learning is a pedagogical technique that involves using video games in educational settings. The technique of incorporating fun into the learning process is known as Gamification. Gaming impacts language as well, such as the way new words and their meanings are introduced into the language. A language is a tool used to communicate with others to express ideas and feelings. The study of structural language that is used in communication between gamers and other players is known as Pragmatics. The context referred to in pragmatics focuses on the word's meaning in contact and how gamers convey information to other players. In Pragmatics, Slang is considered a dialect of the English language used in casual conversation and by teens.

### 3 Data Collection

The data gathering approach for this study was determined by reviewing some existing studies. Finding media related to this issue is the second reason for this research. This study employs the first person-shooting game Valorant as the media after having some experience with the game. This study collects data by playing a Valorant game and looking up slang terms using the game chat feature to get relevant data to assist the research. The data for this research will be gathered over a month by playing the online first-person shooting game Valorant. Additionally, this study will document the obtained data for analysis and gather essential data from the game chat feature to perform the research.

Furthermore, to accomplish the research objectives, this study will begin by analyzing slang terms to determine their category and function. The research started by randomly gathering data from players' interactions in the game chat feature of the online first-person shooter Valorant. After collecting sufficient data, this research will begin categorizing and analyzing the slang phrases found in the game chat function of the online first-person shooter Valorant. Following that, this research will identify and examine the roles of slang

words in the game chat feature of the online first-person shooter Valorant.

## 4 Results and Discussion

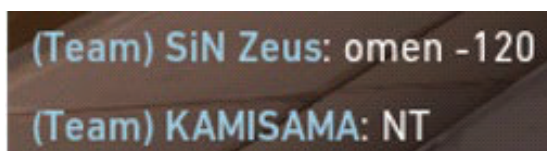
According to the findings of this study, there are four kinds of slang words in the Valorant game's in-game chat feature. Acronym category has seventeen data points, Clipping category has seventeen data points, Creative and Fresh category has five data points, and Imitative Category has a single data point. Because the slang words correspond to the character of the Valorant player, the game displays a cheerful, appreciative, and cynical attitude. According to the findings of this study, slang terms in Valorant cannot be utilized in a formal discussion context. During the course of the Valorant game, forty slang terms were found.

**Table 1.** Category of Slang

No	Types	Number of Slang	Percentage
1	Acronym	17	42,50%
2	Clipping	17	42,50%
3	Creative and Fresh	5	12,50%
4	Imitative	1	2,50%

### 4.1 Acronym Category

The acronym is a category of phrase that is formed by grouping the initial letters of a phrase to be spoken as a single word. The acronym 'NT' serves as an example in the acronym category; the word may be seen in the figure one.

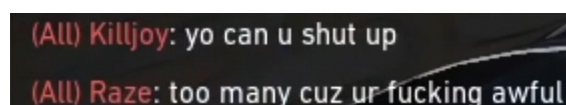


**Fig. 1.** Acronym Category

The slang term "NT" stands for "Nice Try." Valorant players often used this slang term to praise another player who failed to eliminate an opponent when there was only one person left on their team. By praising their team, they were able to build trust in their team and team spirit among their teammates.

### 4.2 Clipping Category

The clipping is a condensed version of a few words, but it conveys the same meaning as the full version of the sentence. The word 'cuz' serves as an example of the clipping category and may be found in figure two.

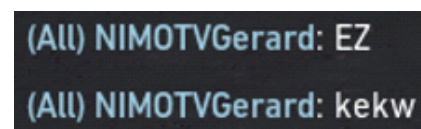


**Fig. 2.** Clipping Category

The term 'cuz' is slang for "because," while the word 'cause' was originally used to indicate "because." Over time, the slang for this word underwent a linguistic transformation that resulted in the term cuz.

### 4.3 Creative and Fresh Category

The category of creative and fresh slang speech includes slang speech that has flare inventiveness, brand-new language, casual variation, brand-new terms, and old words that people are unfamiliar with. The term 'kek' is an example of a category that is both creative and fresh; the word may be seen in figure three.

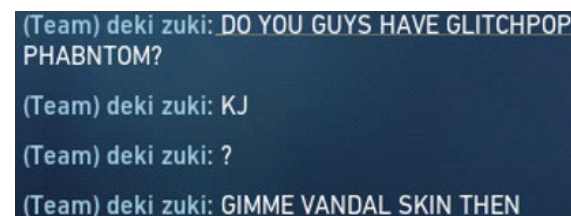


**Fig. 3.** Creative and Fresh Category

The term 'kek' refers to a hilarious loud laugh (onomatopoeia). When a word or collection of words replicate the sounds of the source it describes, it is referred to as onomatopoeia.

### 4.4 Imitative Category

The imitative category is comprised of terms that are based on the Standard English (SE) word, which is formed by merging two separate words and conveying a variety of meaning. The word 'gimme' is an example of the imitative category, and it may be found in figure four.



**Fig. 4.** Imitative Category

According to the Valorant game, the term 'gimme' is formed from the structural of 'give + me,' and it is usually used when our squad requests a weapon.

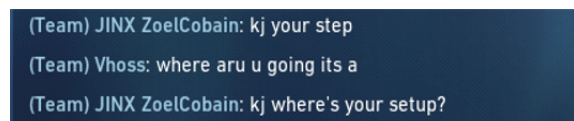
### 4.5 Functions of Slang

This research finds out seven functions of slang in the in-game chat feature Valorant game. As can be seen in table 1 to address get two times of occurrence, to initiate relax conversation with three times of occurrence, to humiliate with six times of occurrence, to form an intimate atmosphere with seven times of occurrence, to express impression with eleven times of occurrence, to reveal anger with three times of occurrence, and to show intimacy with eight times of occurrence.

**Table 2.** Classification of function (adapting from Allan & Burrige, 2006)

Classification of Reason		
Function	Frequency	Percentage
To address	2	5%
To initiate relax conversation	3	8%
To humiliate	6	15%
To form an intimate atmosphere	7	18%
To express impression	11	28%
To reveal anger	3	8%
To show intimacy	8	20%
Total	40	100%

#### 4.6 To address a character



**Fig. 5.** To Address a Character Example

The Valorant players used slang with the function to address a character. From the data in table 2, there were two times of occurrences, in which the function was used to address a character such as kj and brim. In which the function was used for commenting or complaining about a player as in figure 5. In figure 5 the player comment about kj 'killjoy a character' step because in the Valorant game if the player running, the enemies will hear the step and know the position. Meanwhile brim 'brimstone' is a character name.

#### 4.7 To Initiate Relax Conversation

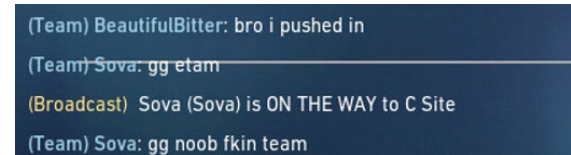


**Fig. 6.** To Initiate Relax Conversation

The Valorant players used slang with the function to initiate relax conversation. From the data in table 2, there were three times of occurrences. The slang word GIMME from figure 6 is to get a relax conversation between players. The example for this function is usually used by players in the middle of the game round

because they need a better weapon to take down the enemies or they do not have money left for buying a weapon.

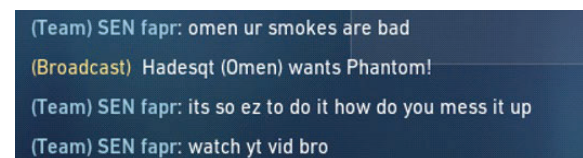
#### 4.8 To humiliate



**Fig. 7.** To humiliate

The Valorant players used slang with the function to humiliate. From the data in table 2, there were six times of occurrences, in which the example of this function is 'noob', noob means is a player with a lack of skill. This slang word is usually used to express unpleasantness to other by mocking them. From figure 7 players do not have to trust each other anymore in the game.

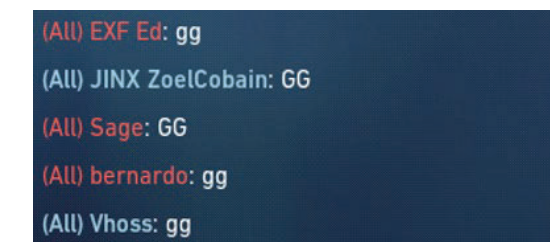
#### 4.9 To Form an Intimate Atmosphere



**Fig. 8.** To Form an Intimate Atmosphere

The Valorant players used slang with the function to form an intimate atmosphere. From the data in table 2, there were seven times of occurrences, in which an example of this slang word function is 'yt vid' YouTube video. It can be seen in figure 8 that a player gives a piece of advice to another player to watch a YouTube video for better gameplay, this conversation usually appears when they try to build trust in each other.

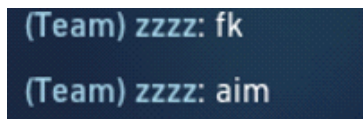
#### 4.10 To express impression



**Fig. 9.** To express impression

The Valorant players used slang with the function to express impression. From the data in table 2, there were eleven times of occurrences, in which an example is 'gg' in figure 9. The slang means is 'good game'. the players often use this slang at the end of the game to give and earn some respect for each other because the players were battling hard and getting a close round.

#### 4.11 To reveal anger

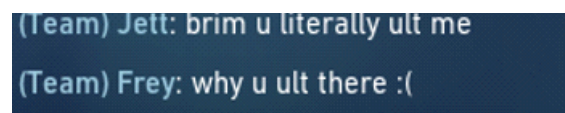


(Team) zzzz: fk  
(Team) zzzz: aim

Fig. 10. To reveal anger

The Valorant players used slang with the function to reveal anger. From the data in table 2, there were three times of occurrences, in which the player uses the slang word 'fk' in figure 10 to reveal anger because of the aim. Aim stands for shooting accuracy. Usually, this slang word uses when the player is annoyed with their aim and the team's aim because of having a bad accuracy in the game.

#### 4.12 To show intimacy



(Team) Jett: brim u literally ult me  
(Team) Frey: why u ult there :(

Fig. 11. To show intimacy

The Valorant players used slang with the function to address a character. From the data in table 2, there were eight times of occurrences, in which it can be seen in figure 11 that two players are using the slang word 'ult' for commenting on the other player because of the wrong ultimate position. The two players show intimacy because they already have trust in their team.

This finding is in line with previous studies because it has been said that people use slang to get closer to each other or to close people. Present study significance, on the use of slang words, becomes an access code between Valorant players and builds trust. The access code affects quick communication in the-game chat feature while playing the Online First Person-Shooting Game Valorant.

## 5 Conclusion

This study has shown variations in slang used by players. From the data analysis, it was clear that there was the frequent use of specific slang and certain functions of the service. The study has successfully revealed the contribution of gaming language as an essential part of the digital language culture. This research highlighted the context-bound usage of slang in the in-game chat system. Of the forty slang words, in-game chat feature acronyms and clipping categories were the two most common slang words used in the Valorant game's in-game chat feature. The players use these two types of slang words because they need a few short words that make them fast in communication while playing. Also, there are periodic functions for addressing a character, initiating a relaxed conversation, humiliating, forming an intimate atmosphere, expressing an impression, revealing anger, and showing intimacy. These functions have revealed the ways digital language expresses social interactions and emotions in the digital era. Such revelation is essential

for identifying digital humanities as centered on the activities and aspirations of people. It is implied that further explorations of the language behavior in digital culture could be used for learning experiences.

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