

The Use of Slang in Delivering Social Satires: A Sociolinguistic Study of Kurtis Conner's YouTube Content

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Received: April 16, 2025

Accepted: May 18, 2025

Published: June 26, 2025

Abstract

This study aims to reveal how slang is used as a satirical tool in delivering social criticism through Kurtis Conner's YouTube content. The focus of the study lies on ironic, hyperbolic, and parodical linguistic forms, and how these elements shape social messages in the digital space. This research uses a qualitative approach with a sociolinguistic discourse analysis method. Data were collected through direct observation and transcription of five Kurtis Conner videos containing satirical elements and the use of slang. The results show that the use of slang in the content not only reflects the communication style of young people, but also serves as a means of delivering social criticism in a subtle but effective manner. Through humor, irony, and satire, slang is able to voice dissatisfaction with conservative values, shallow popular culture, and other social biases. This study concludes that slang in digital media has an important role in shaping young people's social awareness through satirical strategies.

Keywords: : Slang, Satire, Sociolinguistics, Youtube, Kurtis Conner; Social Criticism

1. Introduction

In recent years, the use of slang has become a dominant phenomenon in digital communication, especially among Gen Z and millennials. Slang appears not only in short texts such as tweets and Instagram captions, but also rapidly develops in spoken form on video platforms such as YouTube and TikTok (Hutauruk, Manik, & Sinaga, 2024; Usiazakova & Xursanovna, 2025). Slang allows the delivery of dense, expressive, and culturally connoted meanings, while explicitly forming group identities (Kulkarni & Wang, 2017; Adhi & Masykuroh, 2025). This phenomenon is even more interesting when combined with a satirical rhetorical style, which is often used by content creators to convey social criticism with a humorous nuance. Kurtis Conner, a Canadian YouTuber with millions of subscribers, often uses slang in his satirical speech. The communication style uses phrases such as “nothing says... like...”, “so deep”, and popular slang such as “yeet”, which are not only entertaining but also convey criticism of contemporary cultural practices—such as media objectification, nostalgia of the older generation, and the phenomenon of pop culture fanaticism (Adhi & Masykuroh, 2025; Hutabarat, Siregar, & Nainggolan, 2024). The combination of slang and satire in this digital content shows how modern rhetorical strategies are able to reflect and influence social reality at large. Although there are various studies on the social function of slang on social media such as Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok, there is still very limited research that examines the role of slang in digital satire on video platforms such as YouTube, especially from a sociolinguistic perspective (Hutauruk et al., 2024; Rahmad, Saptasari, & Endang, 2024). The lack of in-depth study of the use of slang as a tool of satirical criticism in this digital content genre opens up a relevant research gap that has the potential to provide new contributions to modern sociolinguistic literature.

Digital satire is now developing as a form of resistance discourse—a discourse of rejection of dominant norms—which often comes in the form of humor, irony, and parody. Platforms such as YouTube provide a free space for creators to express sharp opinions without formal academic formats, resulting in a form of “thinking comedy” that remains light but sarcastic (Shifman, 2014; Zappavigna, 2012). Slang, in this case, becomes a rhetorical instrument that reinforces the impression of casualness and familiarity with young audiences.

Previous research also highlights that the use of language in digital comedy plays a significant role in shaping generational identity (McCulloch, 2019). Slang in satirical videos reflects digital identity as critical, humorous, and

connected to global culture. Slang terms like “yeet,” “sksksk,” or “no cap” serve not only as communication tools but also as symbols of membership in online communities that share similar values and perspectives (Li & Bamman, 2021).

This study aims to analyze how slang is used as a tool for social satire in Kurtis Conner's YouTube content and to uncover the social meanings and identities formed through its use. Specifically, this article offers original contributions by examining: (1) the types of slang used in satirical discourse; (2) satirical techniques that incorporate elements of digital culture; and (3) the sociolinguistic implications of this language strategy for audiences and online culture. This research combines linguistic analysis with digital rhetoric within a contemporary sociolinguistic framework—offering a new perspective on the role of slang in humor-based critical expression.

Previous studies have discussed aspects of slang, sociolinguistics, and digital satire. Kulkarni and Wang (2017) examined the structure and distribution of internet slang and its social implications for the formation of digital identity. Meanwhile, Shifman (2014) focused on how internet humor, including memes and satire, becomes a tool for conveying collective social criticism. In a more specific context, Monteza et al. (2025) examined the construction of identity through digital satire and showed how language strategies reflect the values of online communities.

Research by Hutaaruk et al. (2024) used a sociolinguistic approach to examine the function of slang as a medium for negotiating meaning and social affiliation, and Rahmad et al. (2024) linked it to the representation of youth culture on Indonesian YouTube. In contrast to these studies, this study offers an approach that focuses more on the role of slang as a satirical tool in the YouTube digital commentary genre that has not been widely discussed. While previous studies have highlighted the phenomena of slang or satire separately, this study contributes by combining both within a sociolinguistic framework. With the object of research being Kurtis Conner's YouTube content, this study broadens the understanding of how digital humor can be used as an effective means of social criticism amidst the ever-evolving internet culture.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods to examine the use of slang as a satirical tool in Kurtis Conner's YouTube content. The main focus of this study is how slang is used in satirical strategies to convey social criticism in a humorous yet sharp manner. The study was conducted using a sociolinguistic approach, particularly in relation to language use in the context of digital society.

The type of data in this study is verbal data in the form of Kurtis Conner's speech, extracted from his videos on the YouTube platform. This data consists of transcriptions of quotes containing elements of satire and slang. The primary data source comes from Kurtis Conner's official YouTube channel, while secondary data sources include viewer comments, theories about satire and sociolinguistics, and scientific references related to language in popular culture. Data collection techniques were carried out using documentation and non-participatory observation methods.

The researcher purposively selected several Kurtis Conner videos, namely those that explicitly featured social criticism and the use of slang in a satirical style. The video transcripts were then analyzed to identify forms of satire such as irony, sarcasm, hyperbole, and parody, as well as to examine the forms of slang or popular expressions used in that context.

The data analysis process was conducted using descriptive qualitative methods. The researchers first identified relevant quotes, then classified them based on the type of satire used. Next, they interpreted the social meaning and communicative function of slang in the quotes. This analysis aimed to understand how slang works as a rhetorical tool to convey a satirical yet entertaining message of criticism. The research activity involved several main stages. First, the researcher determined and accessed videos that met the research criteria. Second, transcription and coding were carried out on the parts of the video that contained slang and satirical elements. Third, the data was analyzed by linking the linguistic and social context of the use of the language. The final stage is the systematic compilation of the analysis results, with reference to relevant sociolinguistic theories. Thus, this methodology is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of how slang is not only part of popular cultural expression but also a strategic means of constructing digital satire that is reflective and critical of social phenomena.

3. Findings and Discussion

To further support the analysis of slang as a satirical tool in Kurtis Conner's YouTube content, this study identifies and categorizes ten representative quotes from his videos. Each quote illustrates how specific forms of slang, when combined with rhetorical techniques such as irony and sarcasm, construct socially critical messages in a humorous tone. The classification includes the type of satire, the dominant slang expression used, and the sociolinguistic function behind the utterance. The table below presents two examples from the overall data, showcasing how language choices in digital comedy carry layered meanings that reflect broader cultural critiques:

Table 1. Classification of Satirical Language, Slang Expressions, and Sociolinguistic Analysis in Kurtis Conner's YouTube Content

No	Kutipan	Jenis Satire	Bahasa gaul	Analisis Sosiolinguistik
1.	Yeah because nothing says ‘respecting women’ like having them jump on trampolines for men’s entertainment.	Ironi, Sarkasme	Nothing says... Like....	Kritik terhadap objektifikasi perempuan dengan ironi populer
2.	Ah yes, the classic ‘back in my day’ joke because nothing is funnier than reminiscing about a time when things were worse	Sarkasme	Back in my day	Sindiran terhadap glorifikasi masa lalu secara jenaka
3.	Because nothing screams adulthood like crying over a cartoon mouse	Ironi, Hiperbola	Screams adulthood	Kontradiksi antara usia dan perilaku dibahas dengan gaya sinis
4.	This tiktok is so deep, it makes the Mariana Trench look like a kiddie pool	Hipebola	So deep, kiddie pool	Kritik terhadap kedangkalan konten dengan metafora digital
5.	Linguists are just making up words to sound smart. Next, they’ll tell us ‘yeet’ has historical significance.	Parodi, ironi	yeet	Sindiran terhadap jarak antara bahasa ilmiah dan budaya populer
6.	Guys who think drinking black coffee makes them alpha... Like okay bro, your taste buds are just dead.	Parodi, ejekan	alpha okay bro	Kritik maskulinitas dangkal dengan gaya sarkame ringan
7.	would never hit the gym... because the gym has never done anything to me.	Hiperbola literal	hit the gym	Humor literal di gunakan untuk membongkar budaya gym
8.	Imagine watching a video titled ‘Why Women Deserve Less’ and thinking it’s deep.	Sarkasme	thinking its deep	Kritik terhadap misogini dengan bahasa ringan dan tajam
9.	That’s not red flag behavior... that’s like whole crime scene vibes.	Hiperbola	red flag, vibes	Pelebaran makna slang untuk menyindir perilaku toksik
10.	If you need a podcast to tell you not to cheat, maybe you’re the problem.	Satir langsung	Maybe you’re the problem	Sindiran terhadap moralitas palsu

Analysis of ten quotes from Kurtis Conner's YouTube videos shows that slang is used as the primary tool for conveying social criticism through satire. Phrases such as “nothing says... like...”, “so deep”, or words like ‘yeet’ and “bro” are used to mock popular cultural phenomena such as toxic masculinity, pop culture fanaticism, and digital misogyny. The rhetorical strategies employed are diverse, ranging from irony, visual hyperbole, to literal wordplay. This linguistic style not only creates humor but also subtly incorporates sharp social criticism in a form acceptable to a young audience.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the use of slang reflects the complex dynamics of communication within digital communities. The language used is not merely an informal means of expression but also a medium for representing identity, solidarity, and social position. In this case, Kurtis Conner uses slang as a tool to build a connection with young audiences accustomed to informal and ironic communication styles. In this way, the social criticism conveyed becomes more inclusive and avoids sounding preachy.

This general finding can be observed more concretely through several representative examples taken from Kurtis Conner's videos. The following excerpt illustrates how he uses a specific phrase structure to deliver biting social commentary while maintaining a humorous tone:

Quote:

“Yeah, because nothing says ‘respecting women’ like having them jump on trampolines for men's entertainment.”
Vidio: The Man Show Didn't Age Well

This quote uses a classic ironic structure commonly found in digital communication. The phrase “nothing says... like...” is slang that is widely understood as a form of sarcasm. From a sociolinguistic perspective, this utterance reveals a tension between moral values (respecting women) and media practices (visual exploitation). Kurtis critiques patriarchal culture through a humorous tone, making the message more accessible to a younger audience without losing its sharpness.

Linguistically, the sentence uses a declarative sentence form that contains an implicit contradiction—a common strategy in satirical rhetoric. This shows how informal expressions can be used to voice serious issues with a high persuasive effect. Lighthearted and sarcastic language actually strengthens the power of criticism because it does not feel patronizing.

In the context of digital culture, such strategies indicate an effort to infuse gender equality values into casual entertainment spaces. Kurtis successfully combines ideological messages with a relatable style that aligns with the humor preferences of the online community, particularly Gen Z, who are highly familiar with ironic humor.

Quote:

“Ah yes, the classic ‘back in my day’ joke, because nothing is funnier than reminiscing about a time when things were worse.” *Video: Boomer Humour*

This quote satirizes the way older generations excessively reminisce about the past. The phrase “back in my day” is used ironically to show that the past they boast about was not actually better. This is a typical form of sarcasm that is popular among young digital natives.

Linguistically, the use of this phrase creates an opposition between the present and the past, while positioning the speaker as more realistic and not trapped in romanticizing history. This demonstrates a reinterpretation of collective memory using everyday language.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, this style of humor reinforces the identity of a young generation that is critical of outdated values. The slang in this quote strengthens the solidarity of a young audience that feels unrepresented by conservative views.

Quote:

“Because nothing screams adulthood like crying over a cartoon mouse.” *Video: Disney Adults*

This quote uses irony and hyperbole to mock adults who are overly emotional about animated characters like Mickey Mouse. The phrase “screams adulthood” is a hyperbolic expression that contradicts its literal meaning.

Linguistic analysis shows that this quote subverts expectations of meaning: crying over cartoons is considered immature, but it is presented as a hallmark of adulthood in a satirical way. This creates a humorous effect while also critiquing social standards.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, this sentence shows how the younger generation expresses emotional freedom without stigma. The language used is lighthearted, yet it carries a critique of traditional definitions of adulthood.

Quote:

“This TikTok is so deep, it makes the Mariana Trench look like a kiddie pool.” *video: My favorite Tiktoks*

This quote is a classic example of digital hyperbole. The Mariana Trench, the deepest ocean trench in the world, is compared to a ‘kiddie pool’ to mock TikTok content that pretends to be deep.

This structure is common in meme communities, where extreme comparisons are used to create comedic and satirical effects. The language used shows the flexibility of slang in forming opinions indirectly.

Sociolinguistically, this is a collective expression of boredom with shallow content. The use of extreme metaphors signifies Gen Z's highly visual and critical style of language toward social media trends.

Quote:

“Linguists are just making up words to sound smart. Next, they'll tell us ‘yeet’ has historical significance.” *Video: Are Linguistics Making Sht Up?*

This statement satirizes skepticism toward linguistics by parodying the common view that the study of language merely invents odd terms. The word ‘yeet,’ a popular slang term, is used as a hyperbolic example.

Linguistically, this quote is a form of metasatire—criticism of criticism. Kurtis consciously uses slang to deconstruct assumptions about academic language authority.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, this highlights the tension between formal authority and community language. Slang serves as a tool for digital communities to assert their position against dominant norms.

Quote:

“Guys who think drinking black coffee makes them alpha... Like okay bro, your taste buds are just dead.” *Video: Making Fun Of Masculinity Channels*

This quote satirizes the construction of masculinity through the habit of drinking black coffee, which is seen as a symbol of masculinity. Phrases like “makes them alpha” and “okay bro” are part of popular slang that reflects a cynical attitude toward superficial masculine social performance. This is a form of interpersonal satire commonly used on YouTube as a form of social criticism wrapped in humor.

Linguistically, the sentence structure combines a general statement with a touch of personal irony. The phrase “your taste buds are just dead” serves as the punchline, reinforcing the comedic effect through mild mockery disguised as observation. This style is common in digital communities that use casual language to convey social commentary.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, this quote reflects resistance to toxic masculinity standards. Through light slang, Kurtis not only entertains but also forms a critical social stance. This style allows the audience to feel involved in critical thinking without losing the casual tone.

Quote

“I would never hit the gym... because the gym has never done anything to me.” *Video: Making Fun Of Gym Bros*

This sentence is a play on the idiom “hit the gym,” which typically means to exercise at a fitness center. However, Kurtis interprets it literally as hitting the gym, creating humor through the absurdity of the meaning. This is a form of literal parody deliberately clashing with common logic.

Linguistically, the use of a literal sentence in this idiomatic context creates situational irony. This shift in meaning serves as an effective strategy to subvert audience expectations regarding an idiom that has become overly common in fitness and healthy lifestyle discourse.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, this humor reflects the communication style characteristic of Gen Z, who enjoy deadpan delivery and dry humor. By misusing a popular idiom, Kurtis not only creates a comedic effect but also satirizes how society has standardized healthy living as a performative obligation.

Quote:

“Imagine watching a video titled ‘Why Women Deserve Less’ and thinking it’s deep.” *Video: Reacting to Problematic Podcast*

This quote directly satirizes digital misogyny presented in the form of pseudo-intellectual content. The phrase “thinking it’s deep” is used as ironic slang, meaning the opposite—showing that the content is actually shallow, offensive, and of poor quality.

Linguistically, the imaginative imperative style (“Imagine...”) functions as a narrative opener that draws the audience into imagining an absurd situation, followed by a sharp yet elegant verbal attack. This is a subtle yet effective form of modern satire.

In a sociolinguistic framework, this style is used to create distance between the speaker and the values being satirized. The use of slang not only reinforces the speaker’s position as part of a self-aware group but also broadens access to criticism for an audience that may not be familiar with formal feminist rhetoric.

Quote:

“That’s not red flag behavior... that’s like whole crime scene vibes.” *Video: Green flags vs Red flags*

This sentence expands the popular term “red flag”—which means a warning sign—into something more extreme, namely “crime scene vibes.” By adding hyperbole, Kurtis increases the intensity of her criticism of behavior that is considered toxic.

From a linguistic perspective, this style uses visual hyperbole that combines an idiom (red flag) and a criminal metaphor (crime scene). This creates an additional layer of meaning that strengthens the comedic effect while conveying a social warning. The expansion of slang meanings like this demonstrates the flexibility and critical power of digital community language. Slang is not only a tool for internal communication but also functions as a value system that can regulate social behavior through new conventions.

Quote:

“If you need a podcast to tell you not to cheat, maybe you’re the problem.” *Video: Podcast Bros Be like*

This is a direct form of satire targeting podcast content that offers shallow advice about relationships. The phrase “maybe you’re the problem” is a popular expression used to subtly but firmly call someone out.

Linguistically, this sentence contains the conditional sarcasm structure common in meme language. The flat yet judgmental tone is characteristic of digital communication filled with sarcasm. The precision of style and tone reinforces the speaker’s moral stance without resorting to serious language.

Sociolinguistics views this style as a form of bottom-up norm enforcement, where online communities establish their own ethical standards through viral language. In this case, slang serves as a moral reminder in a format more aligned with digital entertainment culture.

This finding aligns with the research results by Hutaurok, Manik, and Sinaga (2024), which show that slang functions as a tool for negotiating meaning and social affiliation within online communities. Similar to Kurtis Conner’s YouTube content, slang plays a role in strengthening group cohesion through the use of shared linguistic symbols. However, this study differs from the research by Monteza, Puspita, and Azizah (2025), which adopts a semiotic approach to memes as a form of visual satire. This study emphasizes the verbal and audio-visual aspects of the video, such as intonation, comedic timing, and facial expressions, which further reinforce the satirical message in the use of slang.

McCulloch (2019) asserts that internet language has evolved into a complex cultural symbol, and popular phrases such as “no cap” or “yeet” have functions that go beyond mere humor. This study reinforces this view by showing that such expressions in satirical videos also contain a reframing of social reality, particularly in terms of criticism of dysfunctional social practices. A similar finding is reported in Kulkarni and Wang’s (2017) study, which views slang as an alternative semiotic system in digital culture. This research demonstrates that the meaning of slang is highly dependent on its social context—and in this case, the context of Kurtis’s critique of gender, generational, and media culture issues significantly determines the rhetorical function of the language he uses.

Thus, this study makes an original contribution by combining the linguistic function of slang with the rhetorical style of satire in YouTube video content. Slang not only enhances the humorous aspect but also serves as a channel for effectively conveying critical opinions. In the fast-paced and distracting social media ecosystem, this strategy demonstrates that humor and informal language can be the most powerful form of communication in shaping collective social awareness

4. Conclusion

Slang in digital content is not just a form of casual expression, but has transformed into an effective medium for social criticism. Through the use of popular phrases, irony, and hyperbole that are familiar to the younger generation, Kurtis Conner shows that humor can be a bridge between entertainment and social awareness. The satire he constructs is not delivered in an offensive or didactic manner, but through an inclusive and relatable style of speech—strengthening the relationship between speaker and audience in the digital cultural space.

In the context of sociolinguistics, the slang used not only represents group identity, but also becomes a symbolic tool of resistance to established social values. Conner's content shows how online communities produce alternative discourses through everyday language, blurring the boundaries between formality and criticism, between jokes and awareness. This phenomenon strengthens the understanding that language strategies in social media are part of the ever-changing socio-cultural dynamics. Thus, slang in satirical videos can no longer be considered trivial or merely a light communication style. It has become a vital channel for channeling collective anxieties, shaping public opinion, and even correcting dysfunctional social norms—all wrapped up in witty yet meaningful speech.

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