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## WORD FORMATION OF "STONKS MEMES" ON THE INTERNET

**Kaka Ary Sobarna, Abdul Hannan**

English Literature, Faculty of Adab and Humanities, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati  
Bandung, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author: [kaka.strife17@gmail.com](mailto:kaka.strife17@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

The word formation process is concerned with how new words are produced, whether through the modification of preexisting terms or through total invention, which later becomes a component of the "Stonks Memes" language used on the internet. The two goals of this study are as follows: the first is to identify the slang term's altered meaning in "Stonks Memes," and the second is to highlight the process modifications and changes that appear in the online varieties of "Stonks Memes." This method, which classified data based on morphology theory and used Yule's theory as the primary one for analyzing word formation and morphological system, was descriptive in nature. The word-formation process occurred because of the necessity of the stonk meme format, which required the term to be transformed to convey a hilarious connotation. This study found four forms of word-formation processes, including back-formation, coinage, borrowing, and blending. It is concluded that the word in question was purposely altered by the meme developer to fit in the stonk memes framework, changing both the word's sound and its meaning.

**Keywords:** word-formation process, slang, memes, stonks, internet

### INTRODUCTION

The intentional misspelling of "stocks" served as the inspiration for the internet meme "stonks." The image shows Meme Man in a suit standing in front of numerous people, a big orange arrow, and other objects. "Stonks" is the cutline. It was formerly used to refer to inexperienced or subpar financial judgments. Memes are a group of digital objects that have been intentionally created and disseminated by an individual or group of individuals. These digital things then undergo a transformation due to the Internet's widespread drug use (Shifman, 2013). The experimenters can define Stonks Memes as an original variation of Stonks Memes itself by combining those two definitions,

which suggest a message about lampoon, humor, and irony based on the top textbook in the memes and the image used alongside the misspelled word in the punchline (lower textbook) that is being transmitted through the internet in this information age.

The vocabulary used in the culture of the information age varies widely. Variations in language are employed to accommodate different situations, circumstances, or needs. There are two sorts of language: one is formal, typically used in business and formal situations, and the other is informal, mostly used by groups and communities in society to connect with one another in more organic ways based on their daily lives (Decapua, 2017).

In seminars, formal English is typically taught by non-native language experts and used in written form, according to Wardaugh (2006). Meanwhile, Crystal (1985) points out that informal English is a language type that lacks any clearly defined invariant morality and is typically employed in non-formal communication contexts, such as music, books, images, etc. An example of informal English is shoptalk.

The only language that works in a casual setting is shoptalk. The English language gains new words through informal contact in large part thanks to the shoptalk language (Decapua, 2017). Shoptalk is typically produced by the condensing, omitting, or even changing the sound and meaning of one or more letters. Each word in the language serves a vital purpose. If an existent claims that a word is the most basic unit of a language, that existent may be accessible to those who do not study linguistics. However, a person who studies linguistics is aware that words can be created through a process. The method is called the word-confirmation method. In morphology, wordsmiths discuss how a new word might be put together from existing ones all around the world. Some words can be examined that fall under the category of word confirmation and some that don't in order to fully comprehend the term word confirmation process (Table 1).

**Table 1. Word Formation Process Example**

No.	A	B	C
1	employee	apartment building	chair
2	inventor	greenhouse	neighbor
3	inability	team manager	matter
4	meaningless	truck driver	brow
5	suddenness	blackboard	great
6	unhappy	son-in-law	promise
7	decolonization	pickpocket	discuss

In columns 7A and 7B, little components unite to create larger words with more complex meanings. We have, so to speak, words that are morphologically complex. Decolonization can be divided into the minor portions of de-, colony-, -al, -ize, and -ation. The adjective unhappy can be understood as deriving from the adjective joyful through the constituent un-. For instance, the word "employee" can be broken down into its verb form and final -ee. In this approach, we can dissect complex words into smaller meaning pieces. In other words, they are referred to as morphemes.

Unlike columns 7A and 7B, which can be divided into smaller meaningful components, column 7C only includes a single morpheme. For instance, although though the word the neighbor resembles the inventor, it lacks the prefixes neighb- and -or. The inventor, in contrast to neighbor, can be divided into two morphemes since it has both creative and meaningful components.

The complex words in 7A and 7B are examples of morphemes that can happen when other morphemes are added. By alone, they are referred to as bound morphemes as opposed to free morphemes. The root should come first, followed by any other bound morphemes such as -ity, "-ness," or "-less," whereas un- should come before the word's primary meaning component (the "root," "stem," or base). We employ Latin-influenced language, where the prefix un- is known as a prefix and the suffix -ity is known as a suffix, to refer to bound morphs linked to roots (Plag, 2002). The majority of people use this word-formation process in social communication without even being aware of it. People are creating new, odd terms to communicate as a result of this phenomena, which is known as slang language.

This social interaction might take place offline or online in the modern era. In traditional methods, people converse with one another face to face and concurrently at places like schools, malls, homes, and other gathering places where there are large crowds. Online social interaction takes place on social media platforms like Facebook and necessitates a connection to the internet. Early in the twenty-first century, online culture developed a culture through the use of jokes in images, text, voice, and video. The term "internet meme" was coined to describe this emerging kind of humor.

Since the beginning of the digital age, memes have existed. The core idea behind internet culture has changed, though. Richard Dawkins, a biologist, used the term "meme" to describe little "cultural transmission" elements that spread by imitation among individuals in his 1976 book *Selfish Gene* (Immonen, 2017). Dawkins, an evolutionary theorist, linked memories to genes to explain cultural transitions in cultures. He claimed that memories change and vary like genes to adapt to and survive novel circumstances. But it's crucial to keep in mind that he came up with the phrase "digital culture" before the internet was even a thing. Recent academics have concluded that it is still legitimate to investigate contemporary cultural components. Without memes, contemporary online culture isn't what it once was. They are commonly utilized in print and television advertising in addition to the Internet. Internet alerts play a significant role in contemporary culture since they cover hot topics and emerging trends. They demonstrate the public's interests as well as their concerns or amusements regarding their own communities. Memes can give us a deeper understanding of cultural and social processes, as Shifman (2013) notes. She refers to memes as "contemporary folklore" since they employ visual components to disseminate people's beliefs and values. Memes are shared and made by both geeks and young people as well as corporations and politicians. For instance, Barack Obama's campaign for president in 2012 relied extensively on memes to engage a younger demographic. There aren't any established phrases or practices in this industry just yet. Some of the intriguing meme studies that have been carried out include researching subjects as a genre, developing collective identities in

online groups, and popularizing a meme. Memes are not a product of the Internet; they have existed since the beginning of the digital era. Though, the core idea behind internet culture has changed.

Mememes play a significant role in today's online culture. They are frequently used on the internet and occasionally in more conventional media or advertising. The internet is a crucial component of modern culture since it discusses current events and trends. They exhibit what the general population is interested in, what worries them, or what they find absurd in their society. According to Shifman (2013), mememes may seem like nonsense, or just something unimportant, on the internet, but they show cultural and social systems on a deeper level. She says that mememes can be viewed as "modern folklore" since visual elements spread people's values and ideas. Interesting subjects in mememe studies have included researching topics as a genre, building collective identities in online communities, and making a mememe successful in social media.

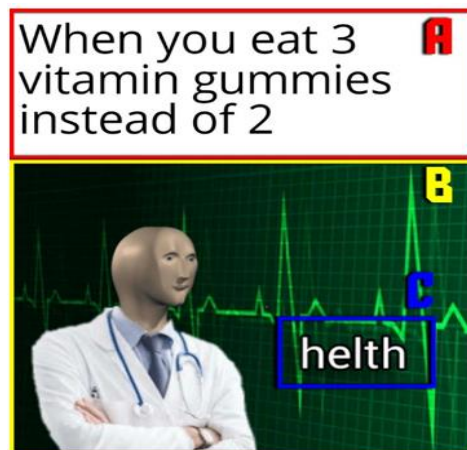


Figure 1

[https://www.reddit.com/r/memes/comments/entlrd/health\\_stonks/](https://www.reddit.com/r/memes/comments/entlrd/health_stonks/)

The online mememe is usually a compilation of texts (Shifman: 2013). When characterizing an online mememe, however, this does not make much sense because the researchers regard them as images with text disseminated on the internet. You can recognize a single video and say "This is a viral video" without referring to any other text (see Figure 1). Because the mememe varies throughout time in accordance with the trend, the culture, and the mememe's creator, it lacks a fixed structure. Looking back, mememes frequently have three components: the top text, the bottom text, and the mememe format. Based on image 1, the top text (A) is a portion of the mememe where the creator writes the starting anecdote/description of the incident to describe it to the reader, usually brief and based on truth. The mememe creator inserts a punchline joke in the bottom text (C) segment; they always keep it short and basic, and it typically takes the form of a sentence or a few words that relate to the top text. The last section is the mememe format (B), which is the mememe's unspoken context. By examining the mememe format, which is often a picture or a character with a specific background to create association between the top text and bottom text, communities can learn more about the mememe. As was previously said, there are many different formats for mememes on the internet, but this

particular one is fundamental because it has been in use since the earliest days of the Internet Meme craze.

Shifman (2013) provides a rather extensive explanation of memes and their use in her book *"Mememes in Digital Culture"*. She continues to define Internet memos more precisely as follows: "Groups" are defined as content unit groups with shared qualities. a collection of digital objects with similar content, form, and/or position that are (a) developed with awareness of one another and (b) have been widely distributed, replicated, or otherwise altered online by many people (Shifman, 2013, p.7).

That was the definition of a meme that the researchers employed. Memes never exist outside of their surroundings and can only be understood with the aid of encoded messages. Memes can be utilized in digital culture to create shared beliefs, according to Shifman. She also makes a distinction between memos and "virals," but she also points out that the two can occasionally be used interchangeably or share some traits. Users that share a viral do not change it; instead, the original content is disseminated. Then, this viral can become a meme when it is combined with something new. Shifman points out that while many memes begin as virals but do not endure, they may have inspired other memes.

The internet has made it possible for people to share ideas internationally. A nice pandemic has struck. There are numerous types of internet memes. It could be a picture, link, clip, still image, webpage, or hashtag. It could be a word or a phrase, like "more" being purposefully misleading for "more" and "the" for "teh." Through the sharing of the meme, these types of modification language gradually develop into new slang terms that are utilized by society online.

This is not the first instance in which a slang expression has been prominently used in research. Numerous studies have already been conducted on this object. Hanif (2015) used the qualitative approach to collect data on soccer. For the data analysis in this study, a random sample was used. Seven word forms, including compounding, derivation, blending, reduplication, acronym & initialism, back-formation, and clipping, were identified in the data out of ten different word-formation processes. Kuspiyah (2016) found the slang types used in the lyrics by a singer Eminem. Because the significance of the slang language is described in Eminem's song lyrics, the study adopted a descriptive methodology. Following that, the study's methodology is utilized to: (1) read and comprehend the lyrics; (2) identify the terms used in the texts; (3) mark the slang words identified in the lyrics; and (4) determine the meaning of the slang words. The researchers discovered five different slang categories, including slang used in homes and in colleges and public schools. Oktavia (2017) analysed slang terms in literary work in the song. The following study uses the qualitative method descriptive. The data was gathered from Internet songs from Far East Movement lyrics. This study attempted to identify and analyze slang words' songs' slang word characteristics in the Far East Movement.

The "Stonk Memes" on the internet were examined for slang. Stonks is a purposeful misspelling of the word "stocks," which is frequently related to a bizarre meme in which the figure Meme Man is shown standing in front of an

image of the stock market with the text "Stonks." The image started to be used online as an inside joke about making bad financial decisions. People have developed numerous variations of this meme by the time it had grown to show sarcasm or irony in the caption. As a result, this study will outline the *Stonks Memes'* slang word creation process and identify the modified/new term's altered meaning.

**METHOD**

This was a descriptive qualitative study relating to understanding the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Additionally, this approach aims to provide a systematic description of the phenomena. This research entails the researchers interpreting the meaning of the data discovered (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, it took place in natural settings that are conducive to human behaviour and events. The study provided context and interpretation for how events occur through the use of words (Creswell, 2014).

Data analysed in the study were memes taken from several websites <https://9gag.com/>; [https://surrealmemes.fandom.com/wiki/Stonk\\_variants](https://surrealmemes.fandom.com/wiki/Stonk_variants); <https://imgflip.com/>; <https://www.reddit.com/>. The websites were chosen, because they are still actively post many contents. After collecting the data, words in the meme were analysed by using the theories, particularly word formation of internet Stonks Memes.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Word Formation of “Stonks Memes” on the Internet**


The study followed the procedures as the study protocols. It tried to explain meaning of the word and the process of modification and changes to form a new slang word in the “*Stonks Memes*” variation based on Yule’s theory (2010). Then, shifted meanings in slang words based on reaction comments were analysed and the types of word-formation would be explained.

**Data 1**

Top Text	When your meme doesn’t reach hot in 10 seconds.
Bottom Text	<i>Angery</i>
The Meme	
Word-Formation	Coinage

*Angery* is a misspelling of the word angry. According to Cambridge Dictionary the term angry; having a strong feeling against someone who has behaved badly, making you want to shout at them or hurt them. In the *Stonks Memes* this meaning slightly alters to become more satire, irony, or humorous based on the top text (the context of the meme). For example; *angery* can be used when someone is angry because of silly thing.


**Data 2**

Top Text	When you befriend the teacher to steal the paper test.
Bottom Text	<i>Spei</i>
The Meme	
Word-Formation	Coinage

The term slang *spei* is a modification of the word spy. According to Cambridge Dictionary the term spy; a person who secretly collects and reports information about the activities of another country or organization. In the *Stonks Memes* this meaning slightly alters to become more satire, irony, or humorous based on the top text (the context of the meme). For example; *spei* can be used when someone is pretend to act like a spy.


**Data 3**

Top Text	When you were playing Cities Skyline and go full grid for the rest of the gameplay.
Bottom Text	<i>Citiplaner</i>

The Meme	
Word-Formation	Blending

The term "city planner" is the source of the slang term "*citiplaner*." According to Cambridge Dictionary the term city; a large town and planner; a person who makes decisions about how something will be done in the future. By combined these two words the final definition will be; a person who makes decisions about city development for the future. In the *Stonks Memes* this meaning slightly alters to become more satire, irony, or humorous based on the top text (the context of the meme). For example; *citiplaner* can be used when someone doing what city planner will do, but fail miserably.


**Data 4**

Top Text	When you smell your fart, and it smells wonderful.
Bottom Text	<i>Terapi</i>
The Meme	
Word-Formation	Borrowing

Surprisingly, the term *terapi* comes from an Indonesian borrowing language with the same meaning. According to Cambridge Dictionary the term therapy; a treatment that helps someone feel better, grow stronger, etc., especially after an illness. In the *Stonks Memes* this meaning slightly alters to become more satire, irony, or humorous based on the top text (the context of the meme). For example; *terapi* can be used when someone is doing mental treatment for himself by smelling his own fart (instead of therapy candle).




**Data 5**

Top Text	When you are singing rain, rain go away, and the rain suddenly stops.
Bottom Text	<i>Wethr</i>
The Meme	
Word-Formation	Back-Formation

The term *wether* refers to the word weather. According to Cambridge Dictionary the term weather; the conditions in the air above the earth such as wind, rain, or temperature, especially at a particular time over a particular area. In the *Stonks Memes* this meaning slightly alters to become more satire, irony, or humorous based on the top text (the context of the meme). For example; *wethr* can be used when someone acts like he is controlling the rain, snow, and wind.

**Data 6**

Top Text	When your teacher gave you A+ for your drawing.
Bottom Text	<i>Ortimss</i>
The Meme	
Word-Formation	Coinage

The term *ortimss* refers to the word artist. According to Cambridge Dictionary the term artist; someone who paints, draws, or makes sculptures. In the *Stonks Memes* this meaning slightly alters to become more satire, irony, or humorous based on the top text (the context of the meme). For example; *ortimss* can be used when someone is pretend to be a great artist because he's got an A+ in drawing.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study discovered that the word-formation process in stonk memes used as slang words on the internet from several meme forums such as 9GAG, surreal memes, imgflip, and Reddit. There are four types of word-formation processes discovered from stonk memes on the internet that are used as slang words from several meme forums found on the internet, such as 9GAG, surreal memes, imgflip, and Reddit. Back-Formation, Coinage, Borrowing, and Blending are a few examples. The transformation occurred from one word to an entirely new one, borrowed from another language, merged to become a new word, shortened to become a new word, and created after multiple processes from one to another.

It is concluded that the word's formation was caused by the necessity of stonk memes, which called for a shift in the word's meaning to one that is hilarious. The word in question was intentionally altered by the meme creators to match the stonk memes' structure, altering both the word's sound and its meaning.

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