A Study: Inclusion of generational slang in UX writing in India

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Abstract:

This research paper studies the influence of generational slang on UX writing in India. As India has a wide culture, language plays an important role in creating content on digital platforms. The content on the digital platforms governs how the user will utilize the interface and the type of user crowd the platform will accumulate. To strategies a good user experience in terms of linguistic content on different platforms, UX writers in today's time work on understanding the progression in linguistic variation and generational slang. UX writing actively works on crafting the content to justify platform needs by working closely with the linguistic professional, web developer, and designer to craft an interactive and seamless user experience for any digital platform. This research paper will begin with an overview of generational slang. Linking it to UX writing to generational slang through the study of various user interface text applied in various digital platforms in the Indian Context.

Keywords: UX writing, Generational slang, User interface text, India

1. Introduction

Language and content play an important role in the digital interfaces which are constantly evolving, where communication flows across digital platforms. Every digital experience, from navigating a website to using an application, depends on the user interface content that guides them through their digital journey. The language content in the digital platforms governs how the user will utilize the interface and the type of user crowd the platform will accumulate. Slang is closely related to language, as they are an integral part of its lexicology. Like linguists in the digital era, UX writers delve into the fluid relationship between language, audience needs, and platforms. To study the relationship of generational slang and content with the ever-evolving digital interface. In this research paper, I studied the works of UX writers in the form of user interface text and analysed if there is an inclusion of generational slang as part of their UX writing in various digital applications in India.

2. Language and UX writing

All digital platforms are governing some sort of content based on the requirement of the platform. To craft engaging interface content a lot of effort goes into it. The part of the interface includes a huge area of interface text being used. These interface texts are part of UX Writing. To produce these experiences, professionals who are experts in linguistics actively research the audience and build the platform with its unique style. They are responsible for creating textual content which we users see and read in the interface text., known as microcopy. To formulate this user interface text these UX writers work closely with language professionals, web developers, and designers to craft an interactive and seamless user experience for any digital platform. With research and gaining insight into the language, tone and style that would be most effective to communicate with the user.

They finally strategize a good user experience with user interface text on various platforms, UX writers create microcopy, that is presented to the users in specific places and times which create seamless insignificant digital text to mould the audience to perform the task and guide them. (Portmann, 2022). The manner of communication within the platform could be through various little text within simple categories sections, cookies, and banner images within the application.

3. Language Style and audience design

UX Writing in a way works with sociolinguistic progression to understand how language and cultures are evolving. As this is directly linked with the style of the way the user is speaking. Bell's work proposes that the audience centres the language variations, where audience design is suggested. The users adapt the language style which caters to their preferences and expectations. A user can use different language styles as a technique to communicate their social identity. Henceforth their language style choices are influenced by situation, context, and relationship with others. Leading to the dynamic process of language variation which the user speaker uses as a cue for linguistic engagement. This theory combines sociolinguistics with communication studies, highlighting how language and audience perception interact. (Bell, 1984). In that notion language as the audience design creates the idea of audience design in which the user speaks

and is not influenced by the social factors but also their perception of the world. This idea provides a subtle insight into how language choices are calculated and flexible, intended to forge connections and express identity.

In relation to digital affordances, there is no doubt that digital platform provides content based on the requirement of the audience. People connect with digital platforms that establish their identity as similar to theirs. The notion that the audience gives rise to new linguistic variation and creates a context collapse, which gives rise to the new sociolinguistic audience. Context collapse is referred a phenomenon where various media platforms diverge together in a single space leading to the blurring of a different set of audiences and interactions. (Alice Marwick, 2011). Thus, a UX writer produces a built-in social identity for a platform with deliberate stylization which connects with the audiences seamlessly. A style which is adaptable to the various linguistic audience in any specific situation in the ever-evolving digital age. (Portmann, 2022).

In digital platforms, even the most commonplace text has two sides: the surface which includes the search bars which we gradually crawl to find searches. The second is the backend processes, the workings of algorithms which may be pursuing agendas which have very little to do with the meanings we read off of the surface of texts. Search bars are an excellent example of how digital technologies have changed the way we perceive and engage with digital technologies. The algorithm does not create new content but based on the audience usage creates the content for future use. Meaning depends not only on what is "said" or "written," but also on how the text's visible components interact with the context in which it is produced and consumed, as well as the identities of the producers and audience including how they are related and what their respective aims are for that platform. (Jones, 2021). Based on that the digital platform creates context for the audience as they select their identity of choice for that particular platform. In short, the audience defines the platform and the platform further defines its audience.

4. Generational Slangs

The manner that communication and interaction have changed throughout time. In this situation, the words employed also had an impact. As digital platforms are evolving, the content in the various platform is moving towards the requirement of the current user base, youth and their trends. The digital platform is placed to express their identity and emotions. This also gets instant reactions from these platforms through likes, comments, and feedback. They have developed new cultures within these digital platforms to express these emotions. Which evokes a new direction towards the language and culture. Moving forward, these create new slang and its usage in various mediums. (Hajare, 2023). The slang is ever-evolving with each generation. The Slang of the current generation is different from the previous generation. It is also referred to be said that the slang of the current generation refreshes the language by adding new meaning through picturesque and striking words to the language. (Cabanas, 2023). Slang words are frequently used in communication today. Thus, Slang is a type of informal language that is used to communicate more quickly and easily among social groups. (Trimastuti, 2017).

As part of the way, that language has changed in the modern, digital world, studying or analysing slang phrases is particularly fascinating. As a result, slang is directly connected to the younger generation with their eagerness to discover their identity, be relevant to their social groups and lead active lives in the digital era. Youth in particular converse informally in a non-standard language that is representative of their generation and serves to further cement their identity as the young generation. (Cabanas J. T., 2023). As further said by Aditi Gosh, associate professor of linguistics at Calcutta University, in an article in Hindustan Times that "Every generation has, in its youth, subverted the conventional use of language to create its own variety. It can even be something like adding Hindi suffixes to English words." (Banerjee, 2019).

5. Mapping generational slang in digital platform

The most adaptive generations to the digital era are the Millennials and Gen-Z. Where Millennials adopted the internet and have accepted a greater variety of platforms since they were more prevalent when they were younger. Gen Z born into the digital age as known as digital natives have the option of being pickier from the start, choosing the platforms while aligning to their identity and ignoring others. Looking into their characteristics as a generation, Millennials are more real and politically aligned. Whereas, Gen Z accept themselves as a diverse group with more identity and technology aligned. Millennials in terms of word development recognised 457 internet slang terms, whereas Gen Zers a digital native recognised 572 terms from the general population. Though there is this disparity in results emphasises the stark difference between the two generations' comprehension and use of contemporary slang terminology. Gen Z's level of technology usage with growing identity is more frequently creating new internet slang, whereas Millennials understand these terminologies and are effective in its usage. (Sophomore Vacalares, 2023).

India as a country is very diverse, generational slang has integrated into the communication system with its rich linguistic diversity. This diversity is an essential element to our digital audience. Apart from that now that, the internet is available to more than half of the population in the world the identity of a group and language has crossed borders and been made

available to adapt to those who seem to be interested in that identity. Now words from different places of the world can feel like our own to the people. With the advent of that more identities are emerging to the digital platform and bringing more gender-neutral words to be used and many contexts. The link of generation slang in India is closer to the US rather than in the UK as per an article in Hindustan time. The article further suggests that language can be influenced by the dominant culture, which in terms of India is through US-based media consumption based on American pop culture. (Banerjee, 2019).

As digital technology continues to transform the way we communicate with each other, language's importance remains unarguable. In the world of the digital world, where contexts and subtext intersect, the consequences of language choices are far-reaching. Language and digital platforms engage in a complex format, with each step shaping not only user experience but cultural development as well. In that context, generational slang becomes a canvas for digital mosaics. Where language moves across borders and cultures, dissolving between dialects and expressions. As the language is passed down from generation to generation, so does its lexicon. Each generation creates a new context in the linguistic canvas, the amalgamation of language and the generation.

Through UX writing we can understand the pulse of different generation and gatekeeping it. Through incorporating generational slang and colloquial phrases. Crafting unique stories for the users to connect and have a sense of belonging. From user interface text to the creating overall user experience in the form of language the audience feels connected to pixels on the screen. Thus, UX writing creates intricate choreography of language, audience and generational change.

6. Methodology

6.1. Object of Study
The goal of this study is to identify how generational slang is been incorporated into UX writing in applications which are of Indian origin or have been specifically designed for Indian users.

6.2. Source of data
The applications which are selected have been shortlisted based on their rank of top downloaded application for the duration of two months from 15 June to 12 Aug 2023 . This list was obtained through Apptopia and similarweb. Subsequently the applications have to be sorted into different categories and 10 of them have been selected to carry on this research. The list of Selected applications and the version has been mentioned in table 1.

Table 1 Selection of applications

Sr. no.	Application	Category	Application version used
1	Wynk Music	Entertainment and music	3.47.1.0
2	Moj	Social Media	2023.15.8
3	Phonepe	Finance	23.07.21.0.5
4	Airtel Thanks	Finance	4.74.1
5	Meesho	Shopping	15.9
6	Myntra	Shopping	4.2308.11
7	Flipkart	Shopping	7.71
8	Ludo king	Games	8.0.0.278
9	Zomato	Travel and booking	17.6.5
10	Book my show	Travel and booking	13.3.0

6.3. Method of collecting data
The data has been collected by observing the application and collecting screenshots to conduct the analysis of the language style used by noting the generational slang used in the user interface text. As in table Table 1 given above, generational slang has been identified and verified by multiple articles and word dictionaries. The application selected is from different categories to understand the adaption of generational slang. As the internet has been flooded by internet slang and classification of slang and multiple media outlet has covered them to be relevant with the ever-expanding slang list.

7. Analysis

This research has covered all the user interface text found in the applications, ranging from small text like microcopy to text in banner images to categories section.

Though the audience would not go through each sitemap with the application this research has included all the generational slang which could be found on the website. This research doesn't include terms and conditions as they are typically been created for legal purpose of the application.

The data was collected through screenshots and then analysed on the word include and not the reuse of the same word within the application user interface text. Several examples will be discussed considering where the user interface text includes generational slang words. Later analysis of examples will be used to determine how many numbers and where the Generational slang words have been incorporated into the chosen application. Given below are a few examples to analyse the data.

Figure 1: Myntra application fwd section

The figure 1 image contains a banner section, which has been incorporated into the section image. The use of words like 'Vibe' reflects the concept of mood and feeling, Subsequently, just below the banner section the user interface test includes 'fits off your feed' where fits relate to the outfit of a person associating with Gen Z slang. Similarly, in the same line 'Fresh styles, fab price' the word 'Fab' is an abbreviation of fabulous.
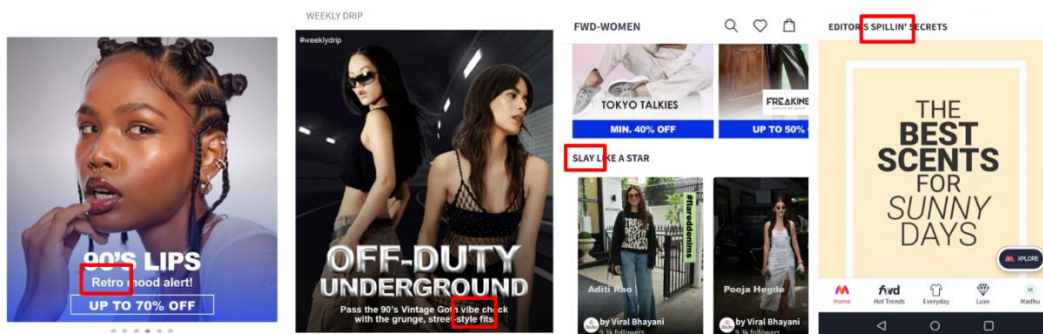

Figure 2: Compilation of few slang in Myntra

For more in-depth incorporation of generational slang look at Figure 2 which offers more Varity on generational slang used in the Myntra application. 'Retro' is a term used for past fashion styles that were popular in the 1970s and 1980s. Similarly, to Figure 1 'Vibe' means mood and feeling and 'Slay' means to impress someone. Finally, Spillin' means telling the truth. All of the terms are used in the context of the fashion-forward approach of Myntra to grab the attention of its audience.
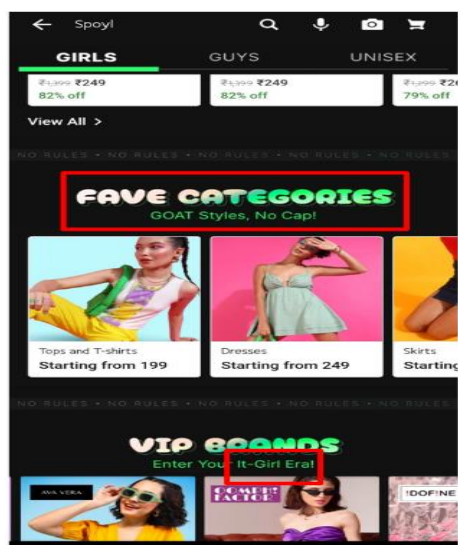
Figure 3: Flipkart application Spoyl section

In the example from Flipkart page from the spoly section has aimed to target towards Gen Z including more than twenty generational slang within that section. In picture figure2 where the words used in the example are 'Fave' meaning favourite, 'GOAT' meaning greatest of all time, 'No cap' meaning no lies, 'Vibe' meaning mood or feeling, It girl meaning attractive and popular young woman. If we look at the other site pages of Flipkart which lack the usage of generational slang tells us about is limited towards the context of use within the application.

Figure 4: Airtel thanks discover section

Similar to the example of Flipkart, in the Airtel thanks application. The main part of the application the application does not include generational slang into its user interface text. However, a section there is a section called Discover within the application which catered toward creating creative content and engaging users to explore new materials trending in the world. This particular section includes generational slang as a means to provide information to its user audience. Through the above image, figure 4 the word used is 'Cuffing' with the meaning provided with it. This particular section is exploring a few ideas along the latest trend but the main function of the application did not have any usage of generational slang.
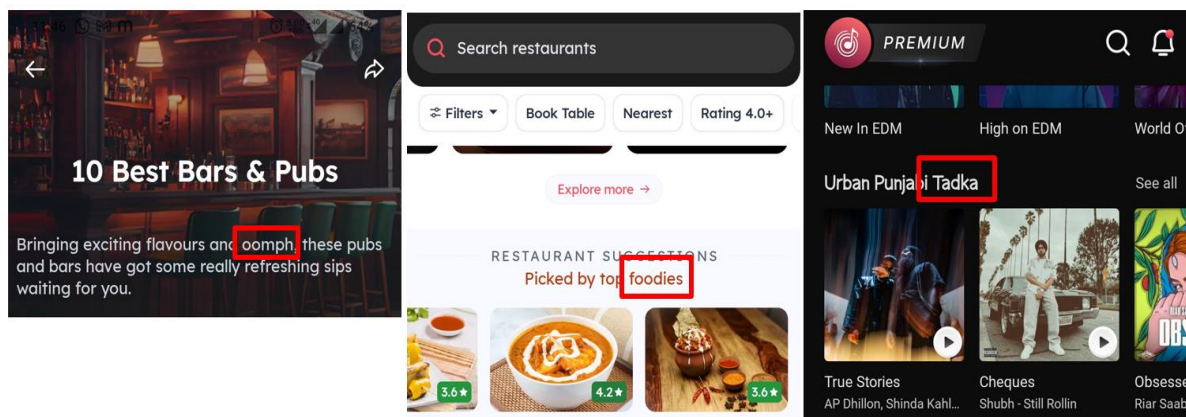
Figure 5: Compilation of Zomato and Wynk

Figure 5 displays example from two different application. With the first two examples from Zomato. The word used is 'oomph' means energetic and enthusiastic, 'Foodies' means a person interested in food. And the last image is of Wynk where the word 'Tadka' is used which is a Punjabi slang meaning tempering of spice. All three examples are now commonly used and can be seen used in various settings**.**

Now, Let's look at the inclusion of generational slang. The data collected consists of the total number of generational slang used in UX writing for the selected application.

Table 2: Inclusion of Generational slang with the application

Sr. no.	Application	Inclusion of Generational (Yes or No)	No. of generational slang
1	Wynk Music	Yes	Below 5
2	Moj	Yes	Below 5
3	Phonepe	No	-
4	Airtel Thanks	Yes	Below 5
5	Meesho	No	-
6	Myntra	Yes	Above 15
7	Flipkart	Yes	Above 15
8	Ludo king	No	-
9	Zomato	Yes	Below 5
10	Book my show	No	-

The data collected have been divided into three levels applications with no slang applications with below five slangs, applications with five to ten slangs, applications with five to ten slangs, and the last above 15.

From Table 2 we can find that the adoption of generation slang is very different among various applications. Of the selected applications four of them did not include generation slang. Where there 4 applications with one to five generational slang. Whereas we can see from the data that Myntra and Flipkart have above fifteen generational slang words which documented 18 and 22 generational slang words respectively them.

From the selected categories of applications, 6 out of 10 applications included generational slang in their user interface text. Among these, the most inclusion of generational slang in user interface text is adopted in the image banner and category description. The inclusion of generational slang was limited to a specific category of application. The application category where we see more generational slang words used is shopping or e-commerce, with this, we can say that the sale with the application can determine how this application can grab the audience's attention. Among them, Myntra and Flipkart being e-commerce platforms had the most generational slang in their user interface text. Which was targeted toward Gen Z for incorporating fashion-related slang into their platform. This created enthusiasm and keep to comprehend the tastes and cultural identity of Gen Z. Whereas applications with a lesser number of generational slangs incorporated in their user interface text had words which became mainstream in linguistic use which can be seen from the examples of the applications like Wynk and Zomato.

8. Conclusion

At last, in the world of the digital landscape where language and interaction collide, UX writing plays a central role. Through the lens of user interface text and generational slang, this research explored the dynamic relationship between linguistic development in digital platforms and user engagement. This study looked at a wide range of applications and understood the inclusion of UX writing through microcopy, banner images, category descriptions, and cookies to uncover the nuances of generational slang. Examining these linguistic nuances revealed interesting patterns and insights.

Through this research, it may suggest that the applications showed varied levels of slang integration based on the audience they cater to and to present a careful balance between linguistic trends and retaining a wider user base. Further providing a link to language as it holds a huge part in creating UX writing and generational slang which is an integral part of language creates sociocultural influence. By reflecting the changing context in the society to express and the tools that make it possible.

In Conclusion, this research journey reveals that generational slang is an integral part of User interface text, but it also reveals that there is a strategic usage of its wide range of applications. As digital platforms are canvases for linguistic innovation, UX writers will aim to create more engagement with generational slang for creating a story of audience engagement and shaping tomorrow's digital experience. This paper not only reveals a few usages pattern of language style but opens the door to explore the everchanging world of language and how it can be utilised in creating more better user experience in the digital world. Future research can be in line to understand how different platform use language styles and it affects platform engagement to create new audiences.

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