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## The Rise of 'Rizz': A Morphological Study of Its Formation and Usage

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### Abstract

This study examines the slang word "rizz" from a morphological perspective, analyzing its formation, evolution, and impact on contemporary language. Emerging from digital platforms, "rizz" was first popularized by Twitch streamer Kai Cenat and has since gained widespread recognition, culminating in its selection as Oxford's Word of the Year in 2023. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this research explores the structural properties of "rizz," identifying it as a clipped form of "charisma" and highlighting its functional shift from a noun to a verb. The study further investigates the role of digital media in the rapid dissemination of slang and how online communities influence language change. Findings suggest that "rizz" exemplifies the dynamic nature of modern slang, demonstrating linguistic creativity and social adaptability. The paper concludes by discussing the broader implications of digital slang in shaping linguistic trends and suggests further research into the longevity and mainstream integration of internet-originated terms.

Keywords: *Rizz, Morphology, Linguistic*

## Abstrak

Studi ini meneliti kata slang "rizz" dari perspektif morfologi, menganalisis pembentukan, evolusi, dan dampaknya terhadap bahasa kontemporer. Muncul dari platform digital, "rizz" pertama kali dipopulerkan oleh streamer Twitch Kai Cenat dan sejak saat itu mendapatkan pengakuan yang luas, yang berpuncak pada pemilihannya sebagai Kata Tahun Ini Oxford pada tahun 2023. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi sifat-sifat struktural "rizz," mengidentifikasinya sebagai bentuk terpotong dari "charisma" dan menyoroti pergeseran fungsinya dari kata benda menjadi kata kerja. Penelitian ini juga menyelidiki lebih lanjut peran media digital dalam penyebaran bahasa gaul yang cepat dan bagaimana komunitas online memengaruhi perubahan bahasa. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa "rizz" mencontohkan sifat dinamis dari bahasa gaul modern, yang menunjukkan kreativitas linguistik dan kemampuan beradaptasi sosial. Makalah ini diakhiri dengan membahas implikasi yang lebih luas dari bahasa gaul digital dalam membentuk tren linguistik dan menyarankan penelitian lebih lanjut tentang umur panjang dan integrasi arus utama dari istilah-istilah yang berasal dari internet.

Kata Kunci: *Rizz, Morfologi, Linguistik*

## INTRODUCTION

One of the popular slang word "rizz" already taken place on a lot of platform or gained widespread recognition. The slang word "rizz" was first introduced by famous streamer from a platform Twitch named Kai Cenat in mid-2021 and has since been adopted by many to describe a person's ability to charm or attract others, particularly in romantic contexts. Linguist Adam Cooper highlights that slang word "rizz" exemplifies the dynamic and creative nature of language, demonstrating how new vocabulary emerges to capture contemporary sensibilities.

Slang word "rizz" also crowned as word of the year in 2023 as stated by Oxford University Press. Casper Grathwohl, the President of Oxford Languages, reflects on the public's enthusiasm for language and the Oxford Word of the Year selection. He finds it remarkable how people engage in discussions about language, emphasizing its power in shaping identity and helping individuals make sense of the world around them.

He draws a contrast between the 2022 Word of the Year, *goblin mode*, and 2023's selection, *rizz*. While *goblin mode* resonated with many in the aftermath of the pandemic, reflecting a period of withdrawal and self-indulgence, *rizz* suggests a shift in the collective mood. The term, which signifies charm and charisma, aligns with a period where people are opening up, gaining confidence, and re-engaging socially after challenging times.

Grathwohl also highlights how *rizz* emerged from social media and demonstrates the rapid spread of language in the digital age. Words that once took years to become widely used can now gain mainstream popularity within weeks or months. The rise of *rizz* showcases how internet culture shapes everyday speech and will continue to influence language trends in the future.

The primary users of *rizz* are members of Young Gen Z and Generation Alpha, who actively engage with digital culture and internet slang. Given that Twitch, the platform where *rizz* originated, requires users to be at least 13 years old, it aligns with the fact that the term is predominantly used by younger generations. This demographic factor contributes to *rizz*'s status as a defining slang term of contemporary youth culture.

The rise of slang word "rizz" reflects the dynamic and ever-evolving of language in the digital age, where platforms like Twitch, TikTok, and Twitter play a crucial role in the creation and dissemination of slang. This study seeks to analyze slang word "rizz" from a morphological perspective, exploring its structure and origin. Understanding its formation and usage can offer valuable insights into how modern slang develops and integrates into broader language practices.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Approach

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, focusing on morphological analysis rather than statistical data. The research investigates the formation, meaning, and usage of "rizz" within contemporary digital communication, emphasizing its linguistic evolution and structural properties.

### Data Collection

#### Primary Sources:

- Social media platforms (Twitch, TikTok, Twitter, Youtube) where "rizz" is actively used.
- Transcripts from popular content creators who contributed to the term's rise.

#### Secondary Sources:

- Academic studies on slang and morphology.
- Online dictionaries, linguistics blogs, and expert opinions on the term.

## Data Analysis

- Morphological Analysis:
- Identifying "rizz" as a clipped form of "charisma."
- Examining its word class flexibility (noun vs. verb).
- Comparing "rizz" to other clipped words in slang.
- Semantic and Pragmatic Analysis:
- Exploring how "rizz" has evolved in meaning from its original root.
- Investigating contextual usage in digital discourse.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### Tracing the Origin of "Rizz"

The term "rizz" is believed to have originated from the word "charisma," which refers to a person's ability to attract, charm, and influence others. The slang term was first popularized by Twitch streamer Kai Cenat, who frequently used it in his content to describe someone's ability to successfully flirt or attract romantic interest. Over time, "rizz" gained widespread recognition and usage across various social media platforms, solidifying its place in modern digital slang. The term's popularity was further amplified by its adoption in meme culture and viral social media trends, leading to its inclusion in online dictionaries and linguistic discussions.

### Morphological Analysis of "Rizz"

Linguistically, "rizz" is an example of clipping, where a longer word is shortened without losing its core meaning. It removes both the beginning and ending of "charisma", making it a non-standard clipping pattern. Additionally, "rizz" demonstrates functional shift (zero derivation) as it can be used as both a noun and a verb.

To illustrate, consider the standard usage of charisma:

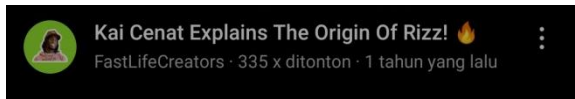
- As a noun: "The speaker's charisma captivated the audience."
- As a verb (though rare in standard English): "He charismas his way through every negotiation."

Although "charisma" is predominantly a noun, in some creative usages, it can act as a verb, meaning to charm or influence someone. However, this verb usage is highly unconventional in formal English.

By contrast, "rizz" naturally adopts both noun and verb forms in slang usage:

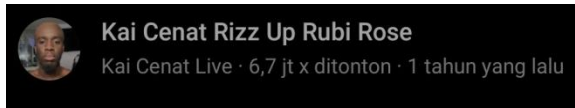
- As a noun: "He has rizz, so everyone likes him."

And here is another example of "rizz" as a noun.



- As a verb: "He rizzed her up with his smooth talking."

And here is another example of "rizz" as verb.



The flexibility of "rizz" as both a noun and verb highlights the productive nature of English slang, where words can easily shift categories based on context and usage trends.

Phonetic Comparison: "Rizz" and Other Words with /zz/

To further analyze the phonetic structure of *rizz*, we can compare it with other slang words that contain the /zz/ sound. Words with a double "zz" often convey intensity, energy, or emphasis, which makes them phonetically appealing in informal speech.

1. "Rizz" (/rɪz/) vs. "Jazz" (/dʒæz/)

- Phonetic Transcription:
  - *Rizz*: /rɪz/ (one syllable)
  - *Jazz*: /dʒæz/ (one syllable)
- Similarities:
  - Both words contain a strong /z/ sound at the end, giving them a sharp and dynamic feel.
  - Both have a single stressed syllable, making them easy to say quickly and memorably.
- Differences:
  - *Jazz* starts with /dʒ/ (a voiced affricate), while *rizz* begins with /r/ (a liquid consonant).
  - The vowel sound in *jazz* (/æ/) is lower and more open than in *rizz* (/ɪ/).

2. "Rizz" (/rɪz/) vs. "Fizz" (/fɪz/)

- Phonetic Transcription:
  - *Rizz*: /rɪz/
  - *Fizz*: /fɪz/

- Similarities:
    - Both are one-syllable words ending in /z/.
    - Both words have an energetic or lively connotation (rizz relates to charm, while fizz relates to bubbles or excitement).
    - The vowel /ɪ/ remains consistent in both words.
  - Differences:
    - *Fizz* starts with /f/ (a voiceless fricative), while *rizz* starts with /r/ (a voiced liquid).
    - Fizz is associated with physical properties (e.g., carbonation), whereas rizz is a more abstract concept related to charisma.
3. "Rizz" (/rɪz/) vs. "Bizz" (/bɪz/)
- Phonetic Transcription:
    - *Rizz*: /rɪz/
    - *Bizz*: /bɪz/ (short for "business")
  - Similarities:
    - Both contain /ɪz/, making them phonetically compact and rhythmic.
    - Both convey a sense of action or energy—bizz (business, activity), rizz (charm, attraction).
  - Differences:
    - *Bizz* begins with /b/ (a voiced bilabial stop), while *rizz* starts with /r/ (a voiced liquid).
    - Bizz has connotations related to work and industry, while rizz is linked to social interaction.
4. Why /zz/ Works Well in Slang
- The /zz/ ending creates a sharp, punchy sound, making the word memorable and engaging.
  - Words with /zz/ often carry a sense of action, energy, or liveliness, which aligns with the slang function of rizz.
  - The phonetic economy of rizz (one syllable, strong ending) makes it easy to use in casual speech and digital communication. Phonetic Analysis: From "Charisma" to "Rizz"

Phonologically, the transition from *charisma* to *rizz* involves a significant reduction in

syllables and phonemes, demonstrating a unique clipping pattern. Below is a breakdown of the transformation using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA):

#### 1. Standard Phonetic Transcription of "Charisma"

- IPA: /kə'riz.mə/
- Syllables: 3 (kə - riz - mə)
- Key Phonetic Elements:
  - The initial /kə/ sound is unstressed and often reduced in fast speech.
  - The /riz/ segment carries the primary stress.
  - The final /mə/ is an unstressed schwa sound /ə/, which is common in English morphology.

#### 2. Clipping Process: From "Charisma" to "Rizz"

- The word *charisma* is reduced from three syllables to one syllable, focusing on the most phonetically salient part: /riz/.
- The initial unstressed /kə/ is dropped, which is a common phonological simplification in slang formation.
- The final /mə/, which contains a weak schwa sound /ə/, is also eliminated.
- The stressed /riz/ segment is retained as it carries the primary phonetic identity of the word.

#### 3. Phonetic Transcription of "Rizz"

- IPA: /riz/
- Syllables: 1
- Key Phonetic Elements:
  - The /r/ sound remains intact, preserving the central consonant structure.
  - The /ɪ/ vowel remains unchanged from *charisma*, maintaining phonetic consistency.
  - The final /z/ sound (voiced alveolar fricative) is preserved, reinforcing the energetic and emphatic nature of slang words.

#### 4. Linguistic Implications

- This non-standard clipping pattern removes both the initial and final syllables, unlike typical clippings where only the beginning or end is cut (e.g., *fridge* from *refrigerator*).
- The retention of the stressed syllable /riz/ makes the word easy to pronounce and

highly recognizable.

- The simplification of pronunciation aligns with trends in modern slang, where brevity and phonetic appeal drive word formation.

### Semantic and Pragmatic Implications

- **Semantic Shift:** While "charisma" generally refers to an inherent personal trait, "rizz" has evolved to focus specifically on one's ability to attract romantic interest. This shift in meaning is a common feature of slang evolution, as words often acquire specialized meanings within social contexts.
- **Pragmatic Usage:** "Rizz" is primarily used in informal settings, particularly among younger generations. It conveys a sense of social prowess and confidence in flirting or dating scenarios, highlighting how slang words are often context-dependent. The use of "rizz" also carries cultural connotations, as it is frequently employed in humorous or exaggerated contexts, reinforcing its role as a playful and performative slang term.

### Lexicographical and Linguistic Perspectives on "Rizz"

- Similar to how "fridge" was derived from "refrigerator," "rizz" follows a unique clipping pattern, omitting both the beginning and ending segments of the original word "charisma." This differs from more conventional clippings, where either the front or back portion is removed.
- Compared to other slang words like "sus" (from "suspicious") or "cap" (from "lie" or "no cap" meaning truth), "rizz" has a distinct etymological background rooted in a positive attribute rather than a neutral or negative connotation. "Sus" implies distrust, and "cap" suggests deception, whereas "rizz" conveys charm and attraction, making it an interesting case in modern slang development.
- The adaptation of "rizz" also highlights how language users innovate within phonological constraints, making words easier to say and remember while preserving their core meaning. This phenomenon exemplifies the efficiency of slang evolution in digital communication environments.
- Dictionaries such as the Oxford English Dictionary and Urban Dictionary have recognized "rizz" as an emerging slang term, further validating its widespread use.
- Linguistic studies on clipping and semantic shifts provide insight into how words like "rizz" undergo morphological changes and gain social relevance.

Expert opinions from linguists emphasize the role of social media and digital culture



in accelerating slang adoption, reinforcing the importance of examining online discourse when studying language evolution.

## CONCLUSION

### Summary of Findings

This study has examined the slang term "rizz" through a morphological lens, focusing on its word formation, semantic evolution, and pragmatic usage. The findings highlight that "rizz" originated as a clipped form of "charisma," demonstrating an unconventional pattern of abbreviation. The phonetic transformation showcases how spoken language adapts words for efficiency while maintaining their recognizable core elements. This phonetic comparison highlights how *rizz* follows the pattern of dynamic slang words, ensuring its linguistic effectiveness and staying power in modern speech. Additionally, its functional shift from a noun to a verb exemplifies the dynamic nature of slang. The term has evolved beyond its original meaning, becoming a widely recognized expression of social charm and flirtation in digital spaces.

### The Significance of "Rizz" in Contemporary Linguistic Trends

The widespread adoption of "rizz" illustrates how internet culture accelerates language change. Its presence in online dictionaries and popular media signifies the increasing influence of digital platforms in shaping linguistic trends. The term's evolution underscores the role of clipping and semantic shift in modern slang development, highlighting the interplay between phonological efficiency and social relevance. Furthermore, "rizz" represents a positive attribute in contrast to many other slang derivations, making it a notable case in lexical innovation.

### Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies could explore how slang terms transition from niche internet communities to mainstream usage. Analyzing the sociolinguistic factors that contribute to the longevity of slang terms—such as their adoption in formal contexts, dictionary inclusion, and media representation—could provide deeper insights into language evolution. Additionally, comparative research on other clipped slang words and their trajectories could offer a broader perspective on morphological patterns in contemporary English.

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