LINGUISTICS AND VIETNAMESE LINGUISTICS

DIGITAL MEDIA AND LINGUISTIC ADAPTATION IN CONTEMPORARY VIETNAMESE: AN EVIDENCE-BASED ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL, LEXICAL, AND MULTIMODAL CHANGE

NGUYEN THI KIM DUNG*

ABSTRACT: The rapid expansion of digital media has transformed the communicative ecology of contemporary Vietnamese by accelerating linguistic innovation across grammar, vocabulary, discourse, and multimodal meaning-making. This condensed article synthesizes interdisciplinary scholarship in language change, sociolinguistics, Computer-Mediated Communication, Internet Linguistics, Social Semiotics, and Vietnamese linguistics to explain how social networking platforms, messaging applications, and short-video services shape everyday Vietnamese. Drawing on PRISMA-informed evidence synthesis (Page et al., 2021), the analysis shows that digital media does not fundamentally alter the structural system of Vietnamese. Instead, it intensifies communicative adaptation through context-dependent ellipsis, predicate reduction, clause compression, orthographic play, English borrowing, semantic extension, abbreviations, slang, emojis, stickers, hashtags, typography, and platform-specific registers. These developments should be interpreted as functional diversification rather than linguistic deterioration. Vietnamese users continue to distinguish between formal and informal registers while expanding the language's expressive resources for digital environments. The article proposes an integrated model linking technological affordances, communicative practices, linguistic adaptation, social functions, and language evolution.

KEY WORDS*:* digital media, contemporary Vietnamese, language change, computer-mediated communication, internet linguistics, multimodal communication, sociolinguistics

RECEIVED: July, 6th, 2026. EDITED: November, 19th, 2026

1. Introduction

Language changes as societies, technologies, and communicative practices change. The development of writing, print, broadcasting, and digital communication has repeatedly reshaped how people exchange information, but such change is not equivalent to linguistic decline. Aitchison (2013) argues that variation and change are natural properties of living languages, while Labov (1994, 2001) demonstrates that linguistic innovation becomes socially meaningful through repeated use within communities.

In Vietnam, digital communication now occurs routinely on Facebook, Zalo, TikTok, YouTube, Messenger, Threads, and related platforms. These environments combine immediacy, interactivity, multimodality, persistence, algorithmic circulation, and networked participation. As a result, written Vietnamese increasingly features features associated with speech and visual resources such as emojis, stickers, GIFs, hashtags, images, videos, hyperlinks, and reaction icons (Crystal, 2006, 2011; Herring et al., 2013).

Everyday messages such as "*Ăn chưa?, Đang tới nè, Ko sao đâu □, Inbox mình nhé, Đu trend, Flex nhẹ"*, and "*Livestream tối nay*" illustrate how grammatical economy, lexical innovation, code-switching, and multimodal expression have become routine in digital interaction. These forms are not random errors. They are context-sensitive choices shaped by platform affordances, user relationships, interaction speed, and the need to convey stance, affect, humor, intimacy, and identity.

Existing research on Vietnamese digital language has documented internet slang, abbreviations,

**VNU University of Languages and International Studies; Email: nguyenthi.kimdung48@gmail.com*

English borrowing, code-switching, and emoji use, especially in relation to online language varieties (Nguyen Van Khang, 2019) and discourse context (Nguyen Hoa, 2021). However, much of this work treats grammar, vocabulary, multimodality, and platform variation separately. A more integrated explanation is needed to show how technological affordances, communicative practices, social interaction, and linguistic adaptation jointly contribute to the evolution of contemporary Vietnamese.

This study therefore asks four questions: (1) How has digital media influenced grammatical, lexical, discourse, and multimodal characteristics of contemporary Vietnamese? (2) How do platforms contribute to distinct patterns of linguistic innovation and communicative practice? (3) What social and communicative functions do these adaptations perform? (4) How can the evolution of contemporary Vietnamese be explained through an integrated framework combining CMC, Internet Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, and Social Semiotics?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Language Change in the Digital Age

Language change includes phonological reduction, lexical innovation, semantic shift, grammatical reanalysis, and pragmatic adaptation (Labov, 1994, 2001). Digital media does not invent these mechanisms; it accelerates their visibility and circulation. Because online forms can spread instantly across large networks, innovations that once moved slowly through local communities may now become recognizable nationwide within days.

Public anxiety about new media often frames online writing as evidence of decline. Yet historical linguistics suggests that new communication technologies usually expand registers rather than destroy linguistic systems (Aitchison, 2013). In digital Vietnamese, abbreviated forms, omitted elements, unconventional punctuation, and multimodal signs usually serve efficiency, emotional expression, and interpersonal alignment rather than structural instability.

Vietnamese is particularly compatible with this adaptation because it is analytic and relies heavily on context, word order, lexical meaning, and pragmatic inference rather than inflectional morphology (Thompson, 1987). Expressions such as "*Ăn chưa?, Đến chưa?, Mai nhé, Đang trên đường"*, and "*Xong rồi*" remain intelligible because interlocutors recover omitted information from shared context.

For example, everyday online messages commonly include: "*Ăn chưa?;Đến chưa;Mai nhé;Đang trên đường;Xong rồi".*

2.2. Computer-Mediated Communication and Internet Linguistics

CMC research explains how technology shapes interaction without determining language mechanically. Early cue-reduction theories suggested that electronic communication might be socially impoverished (Sproull & Kiesler, 1986). Later work showed that users compensate through adaptive strategies. Walther's (1996, 2011) Hyperpersonal Model argues that online interaction can support rich interpersonal communication through selective self-presentation, message planning, and relational adaptation.

Herring (2004, 2007) further demonstrates that digital discourse varies according to synchronicity, participation structure, audience size, message persistence, technological affordances, and communicative purpose. This helps explain why Vietnamese differs across Facebook, Zalo, TikTok, YouTube, and Threads: each platform encourages different interactional rhythms, degrees of publicness, and multimodal conventions.

Internet Linguistics describes online language as a hybrid domain combining speech-like spontaneity with writing-like permanence and visual organization (Crystal, 2006, 2011). Vietnamese forms such as "*kkk, hihi, trời ơiii, đỉnh quáaaa*", and "*okkkkk*" deliberately manipulate spelling to represent laughter, intonation, intensity, and interpersonal stance.

2.3. Multimodality and Social Semiotics

Social Semiotics treats language as a resource for social meaning rather than a closed set of formal rules. Halliday (1978) identifies ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions, all of which remain relevant in digital communication. Kress (2010), Jewitt (2014), and Kress and van

Leeuwen (2021) extend this view by showing that contemporary meaning-making is multimodal: text, image, color, layout, typography, gesture, sound, and moving image operate together.

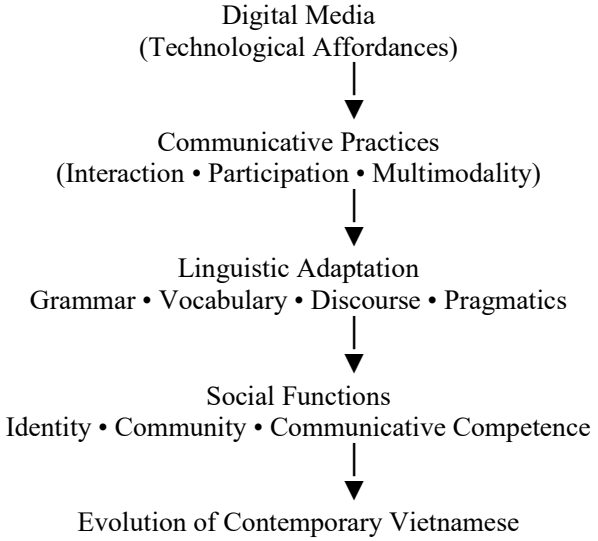
In Vietnamese digital interaction, a short textual utterance may change meaning substantially when accompanied by an emoji. "*Được rồi*" alone can signal agreement; "*Được rồi*" can signal friendliness; "*Được rồi*" can signal irritation or irony. Dresner and Herring (2010) argue that emojis often function as pragmatic markers, while Evans (2017) treats emoji use as an emerging semiotic system.

2.4. Previous Studies on Digital Vietnamese and Research Gap

Nguyen Van Khang (2019) provides a major analysis of Vietnamese network language, documenting abbreviations, creative orthography, borrowing, and online communicative conventions. Nguyen Hoa (2021) emphasizes that Vietnamese discourse meaning depends on context, participant relationships, and communicative intention. International studies of code-switching, youth language, and digital discourse further support the view that online forms are often creative and register-sensitive rather than deficient (Gardner-Chloros, 2009; Tagliamonte & Denis, 2008).

The key gap is fragmentation. Prior studies often examine abbreviations, English borrowings, emojis, or platform discourse separately. This study integrates four perspectives: CMC explains affordances; Internet Linguistics explains online linguistic innovation; Social Semiotics explains multimodal meaning; and Sociolinguistics explains variation, identity, and community (Halliday, 1978; Hymes, 1972; Labov, 2001).

Figure 1. *Analytical Framework of the Present Study*



3. Methodology

This study employs an evidence-based analytical design that combines systematic literature synthesis with qualitative linguistic analysis. It does not collect primary data through questionnaires, interviews, or experiments; instead, it synthesizes published scholarship on language change, CMC, Internet Linguistics, multimodality, sociolinguistics, and Vietnamese digital language. Following Xiao and Watson (2019), the purpose of evidence synthesis is not merely to summarize sources but to identify recurring patterns and develop broader analytical interpretation.

The principal theoretical sources include Aitchison (2013), Labov (1994, 2001), Hymes (1972), Herring (1996, 2004, 2007), Walther (1996, 2011), Crystal (2006, 2011), Barton and Lee (2013), Thurlow and Mroczek (2011), Halliday (1978), Kress (2010), Jewitt (2014), and Kress and van Leeuwen (2021). Vietnamese-language contextualization is provided by Nguyen Van Khang (2019), Nguyen Hoa (2021), and Thompson (1987).

Literature selection followed four criteria: relevance to language change, CMC, Internet Linguistics, multimodal communication, sociolinguistics, or Vietnamese digital language; scholarly quality; theoretical relevance; and direct applicability to Vietnamese communication. Government reports, blogs, commercial websites, and unsupported opinion pieces were excluded. Screening and evidence synthesis followed the transparency principles of PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021).

Table 1. *Overview of the Research Methodology*

Research Stage	Activities	Data Sources	Expected Output
Research Design	Establish evidence-based analytical framework	Methodological literature	Research design
Literature Identification	Search and collect relevant publications	Books, peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings	Initial literature database
Screening and Eligibility	Apply inclusion and exclusion criteria	Retrieved publications	Eligible literature
Data Extraction	Extract theoretical concepts, linguistic phenomena, and analytical findings	Selected publications	Analytical database
Thematic Analysis	Classify findings into grammatical, lexical, multimodal, discourse, and sociolinguistic themes	Evidence database	Thematic synthesis
Integrated Interpretation	Interpret relationships among themes using interdisciplinary theories	Synthesized evidence	Integrated analytical model
Discussion and Implications	Explain theoretical and practical implications	Synthesized findings	Evidence-based conclusions

Figure 2. *Analytical Procedure of the Study*

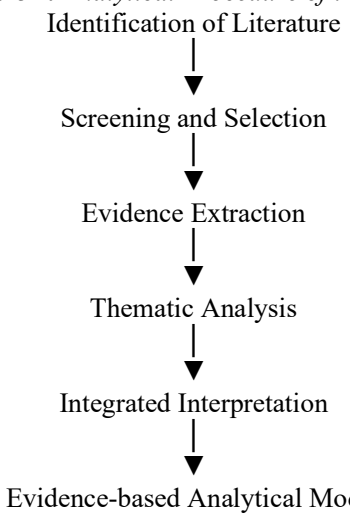
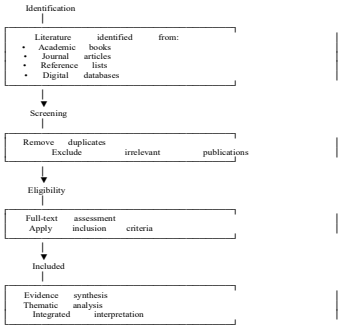


Figure 3. *PRISMA-Based Literature Selection Process (Adapted from Page et al., 2021)*



Because the study uses only published academic literature, no human participants or personal data were involved. Ethical research standards were maintained through accurate attribution, avoidance of plagiarism, and APA 7 citation and reference formatting.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

4.1.1. Grammatical Adaptation in Contemporary Vietnamese

The first major finding is that digital media accelerates functional adaptation rather than structural transformation in Vietnamese grammar. Online communication affects how grammatical resources are deployed, not the underlying organization of Vietnamese grammar. This distinction matters because many digital messages omit subjects, compress clauses, reduce predicates, and use unconventional punctuation. Within context, however, these are efficient discourse strategies rather than evidence of grammatical collapse (Aitchison, 2013; Crystal, 2011; Nguyen Van Khang, 2019).

Vietnamese allows extensive context-dependent ellipsis because grammatical relations are often inferred from discourse context rather than morphology (Thompson, 1987). Digital platforms intensify this tendency by rewarding speed, turn-taking, and conversational economy. The most common patterns are subject omission, predicate reduction, clause compression, pragmatic inference, multimodal completion, reduced repetition, and orthographic adaptation.

Table 2. *Major Patterns of Grammatical Adaptation in Contemporary Vietnamese Digital Communication*

Grammatical phenomenon	Standard Vietnamese	Digital Vietnamese	Communicative function	Theoretical interpretation
Subject omission	Tôi đang đi làm.	Đang đi làm.	Efficiency	Context-dependent ellipsis
Predicate reduction	Tôi sẽ đến ngay.	Đến liền.	Immediacy	Functional economy
Clause compression	Nếu đồng ý thì bắt đầu.	OK bắt đầu.	Interaction speed	Conversational adaptation
Contextual inference	Chúng ta gặp nhau vào ngày mai nhé.	Mai nhé.	Shared knowledge	Pragmatic inference
Emoji-supported grammar	Tôi đồng ý.	OK 👍	Emotional expression	Multimodal completion
Reduced repetition	Tôi biết rồi.	Biết rồi 😅	Economy	Discourse efficiency

Source: Synthesized by the author based on Halliday (1978), Thompson (1987), Crystal (2011), Herring (2007), Nguyen Van Khang (2019), and Nguyen Hoa (2021).

Subject omission is especially systematic. The sender, recipient, or topic is often recoverable from the conversation, so explicit subjects become unnecessary. This produces expressions such as "*Đang học, Về tới rồi, Đang làm, Gọi sau nhé*", and "*Tới rồi*". In relational terms, ellipsis also signals closeness: "*Bạn đã ăn cơm chưa*?" is more explicit and formal than "*Ăn chưa*?", which is intimate and conversational (Hymes, 1972).

Table 3. *Subject Omission and Context-Dependent Ellipsis*

Standard Vietnamese	Digital Vietnamese
Tôi đang học.	*Đang học.*
Tôi vừa về đến nhà.	*Về tới rồi.*
Tôi đang làm việc.	*Đang làm.*
Tôi sẽ gọi lại sau.	*Gọi sau nhé.*
Tôi đến nơi rồi.	*Tới rồi.*

Predicate reduction likewise preserves the informational core while removing recoverable grammatical material. "*Tôi sẽ đến ngay*" becomes "*Đến liền*"; "*Tôi đang trên đường*" becomes "*Đang tới; Tôi đã hoàn thành rồi*" becomes "*Xong rồi*". In hybrid forms such as "*Rep sau nhé, Check lại, Update sau*", or "*Inbox mình*", English lexical items are inserted into Vietnamese syntax without changing Vietnamese grammatical organization (Gardner-Chloros, 2009).

Table 4. *Predicate Reduction and Grammatical Economy*

Formal Vietnamese	Digital Vietnamese	Type of Adaptation
Tôi sẽ đến ngay.	Đến liền.	Predicate reduction
Tôi đang trên đường.	Đang tới.	Predicate simplification
Tôi đã hoàn thành rồi.	Xong rồi.	Lexical reduction
Tôi sẽ trả lời sau.	Rep sau nhé.	Predicate + code-switching
Tôi sẽ kiểm tra lại.	Check lại.	Predicate substitution

Clause compression reorganizes discourse rather than simply shortening syntax. A formal sentence such as "*Nếu ngày mai bạn rảnh thì chúng ta có thể gặp nhau để trao đổi về dự án*" may be distributed into short turns: "*Mai rảnh không? Gặp nhé. Trao đổi vụ dự án*". Similarly, "Sau khi hoàn thành công việc, tôi sẽ gửi tài liệu cho bạn" becomes "*Làm xong. Gửi luôn*". This structure resembles speech-like incremental delivery while remaining visually written (Crystal, 2011).

Orthographic adaptation expands pragmatic meaning. Repeated letters, capitalization, punctuation, abbreviations, particles, and emoji combinations represent emphasis, hesitation, friendliness, irony, politeness, or affect. For example, "*Đẹpppp, Hay quáaaaa, QUÁ ĐỈNH, Thiệt hả???, Trời ơi!!!!, ko, hok, mik, bn, j, dc, cx, nt, nha, nhé, nè, hen, ha, á, cơ*", and "*Ok nha* 💙". These are not random deviations; they are register-specific visual cues for prosody and stance (Dresner & Herring, 2010; Evans, 2017).

Table 5. *Major Orthographic and Pragmatic Adaptations in Contemporary Vietnamese Digital Communication*

Digital Feature	Example	Primary Function	Linguistic Interpretation
Letter repetition	Đẹpppp	Emotional emphasis	Prosodic representation

Capitalization	QUÁ ĐỈNH	Intensification	Visual prominence
Multiple punctuation	??? !!!	Emotional expression	Pragmatic marking
Orthographic abbreviation	ko, mik, bn	Typing economy	Orthographic reduction
Sentence-final particles	nha, nhé, nè	Interpersonal politeness	Pragmatic modulation
Emoji combination	Ok nha 💟	Emotional reinforcement	Multimodal pragmatics

Source: Synthesized by the author based on Halliday (1978), Crystal (2011), Dresner and Herring (2010), Evans (2017), Nguyễn Van Khang (2019), and Nguyen Hoa (2021).

4.1.2. Lexical Innovation and Semantic Change

Lexical innovation is the most dynamic dimension of digital Vietnamese. Compared with grammatical adaptation, lexical change is more creative, visible, and responsive to technology, popular culture, platform trends, and social evaluation. New vocabulary emerges through borrowing, code-mixing, abbreviation, semantic extension, slang formation, and productive compounding (Aitchison, 2013; Crystal, 2011; Labov, 2001).

Digital media introduces new communicative needs: livestream, podcast, hashtag, story, AI, creator, content, vlog, chatbot, cloud, viral, deadline, and feedback names of practices or technologies that became common through online life. At the same time, Vietnamese words acquire new digital meanings. "*Đu"* no longer only means physical swinging or clinging; in "*đu trend, đu concert*", and "*đu idol*", it means active participation in cultural or online phenomena. "*Thả in thả tim*" means reacting with an emoji rather than releasing an object.

Table 6. *Major Types of Lexical Innovation in Contemporary Vietnamese Digital Communication*

Type of lexical innovation	**Representative examples**	**Mechanism of change**	**Primary communicative function**
Direct English borrowing	livestream, podcast, hashtag, content, AI	Borrowing	Naming new technological concepts
Hybrid Vietnamese–English compounds	đăng story, làm content, edit video, check inbox	Code-mixing	Communicative efficiency
Semantic extension	đu trend, viral, follow, thả tim	Meaning expansion	New digital meanings
Abbreviation	rep, ib, ad, kb	Lexical reduction	Typing economy
Creative slang	flex, chữa lành, bóc phốt, toxic	Innovation and semantic shift	Identity construction
Productive compounding	video ngắn, nhà sáng tạo nội dung, trí tuệ nhân tạo	Native lexical creation	Localization of new concepts

Source: Synthesized by the author based on Aitchison (2013), Crystal (2006, 2011), Barton and Lee (2013), Gardner-Chloros (2009), Nguyen Van Khang (2019), and Labov (2001).

English borrowing and code-switching should be interpreted as functional adaptation rather than language replacement. Speakers may alternate between "*phát trực tiếp*" and "*livestream, phản hồi*" and "*feedback", "xu hướng*" and "*trend*", depending on audience, genre, and purpose. Borrowed items

usually follow Vietnamese syntax: *"Mai mình livestream lúc 8 giờ; Video này đang lên trend rất nhanh; Nhớ update cho mình nhé; Bạn đã check inbox chưa; Content hôm nay khá hấp dẫn".*

Table 7. *English Borrowing and Vietnamese Equivalents in Digital Contexts*

English-derived expression	Vietnamese equivalent	Typical digital context
livestream	phát trực tiếp	Facebook, TikTok
content	nội dung	Social media creation
creator	nhà sáng tạo nội dung	YouTube, TikTok
podcast	chương trình phát thanh số	Digital media
trend	xu hướng	Social media
hashtag	thẻ chủ đề	Instagram, Facebook
feedback	phản hồi	Online business
deadline	hạn chót	Workplace communication
update	cập nhật	General online communication
AI	trí tuệ nhân tạo	Technology

Table 8. *English Forms and Vietnamese Equivalents*

English form	Vietnamese equivalent
trend	xu hướng đang được nhiều người quan tâm
feedback	phản hồi
update	cập nhật thông tin
inbox	hộp thư riêng

Semantic change is also prominent. Familiar words expand into digital contexts through metaphor, function, evaluation, and community practice. Flex means displaying achievement; toxic evaluates harmful behavior; chữa lành becomes a cultural keyword associated with emotional recovery; bóc phốt means exposing misconduct; cày view means repeatedly watching to increase views; xin vía invokes borrowed luck or positive energy. These forms construct identity and community membership as much as they transmit information.

Table 9. *Lexical Items and Digital Semantic Change*

Lexical item	Traditional meaning	Digital meaning	Mechanism of semantic change
đu	swing, cling physically	participate in trends or events	Metaphorical extension
thả	release an object	react with an emoji	Functional extension
viral	biological transmission	rapid online dissemination	Domain transfer
follow	accompany	subscribe to online content	Technological specialization
trend	tendency	viral online phenomenon	Semantic narrowing
creator	producer	digital content producer	Professional specialization

Table 10. *Common Abbreviations in Digital Vietnamese*

Standard Vietnamese	Digital Form	Meaning
không	ko / k	no, not
được	dc	be able to
biết	bít / bt	know
người yêu	ny	boyfriend/girlfriend
tin nhắn	tn	message
trả lời	rep	reply
nhắn tin	ib	inbox/message
kết bạn	kb	add friend
bình luận	cmt	comment
quản trị viên	ad	administrator

Table 11. *Internet Slang and Communicative Function*

Internet slang	Approximate meaning	Primary communicative function
flex	show off achievements	Identity performance
toxic	psychologically harmful	Social evaluation
bóc phốt	publicly expose misconduct	Public criticism
chữa lành	emotional recovery	Emotional expression
đỉnh của chóp	extremely impressive	Positive evaluation
chốt đơn	confirm a purchase	Commercial interaction
bão haha	large numbers of laughing reactions	Community participation
thả tim	react with a heart emoji	Positive interpersonal stance

Table 12. *Mechanisms and Motivations of Lexical Innovation*

Mechanism	Representative examples	Communicative motivation
Abbreviation	ko, dc, ny, ib, rep	Typing economy
Internet slang	flex, toxic, chữa lành	Identity construction
Metaphorical extension	cày phim, đu trend	Semantic innovation
Native compounding	tài khoản ảo, video ngắn	Lexical expansion
Hybrid compounds	edit ảnh, đăng story	Bilingual communication
Platform vocabulary	thả tim, bão like, câu view	Platform-specific interaction

Source: Synthesized by the author based on Crystal (2011), Barton and Lee (2013), Gardner-Chloros (2009), Labov (2001), Nguyễn Van Khang (2019), and Aitchison (2013).

Overall, lexical innovation expands rather than replaces Vietnamese expressive capacity. The same speaker may use formal Vietnamese in academic writing, mixed Vietnamese-English in professional communication, and slang-rich forms in peer interaction. This register awareness confirms that digital vocabulary operates within sociolinguistic competence rather than outside it (Hymes, 1972; Labov, 2001).

4.1.3. Multimodal Communication and Digital Discourse

The third major finding is that contemporary Vietnamese digital communication is increasingly multimodal. Meaning is no longer carried by written text alone. Emojis, stickers, GIFs, typography, hashtags, images, videos, hyperlinks, reaction icons, subtitles, and soundtracks jointly shape interpretation. This finding extends Halliday's (1978) functional account of meaning and supports multimodal theory (Jewitt, 2014; Kress, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021).

Emojis frequently modify illocutionary force. "Mai gặp nhé. is neutral; Mai gặp nhé 😊" signals friendly enthusiasm; "Mai gặp nhé 😂" suggests humor; "Mai gặp nhé 💙" conveys warmth; "Mai gặp nhé 😅" may soften awkwardness; "Mai gặp nhé 😳" can imply irritation. Thus, emojis do not merely decorate text. They perform pragmatic work that would otherwise require facial expression, gesture, tone of voice, or additional verbal explanation (Dresner & Herring, 2010; Evans, 2017).

Table 13. *Message Interpretation with Emoji Support*

Message	Likely interpretation
Mai gặp nhé.	Neutral agreement
Mai gặp nhé 😊	Friendly enthusiasm
Mai gặp nhé 💙	Affection and emotional closeness
Mai gặp nhé 👍	Confirmation or approval
Mai gặp nhé 😂	Humorous or ironic tone
Mai gặp nhé 😒	Reluctance or dissatisfaction

Table 14. *Emoji Use and Communicative Function*

Emoji use	Example	Primary communicative function
😊	Cảm ơn nhé 😊	Friendliness
💙	Chúc ngủ ngon 💙	Emotional intimacy
👍	Ok 👍	Confirmation
😂	Hay quá 😂	Shared humor
😅	Xin lỗi nha 😅	Mitigation of embarrassment
😭	Deadline nhiều quá 😭	Emotional exaggeration
😎	Xong hết rồi 😎	Confidence or playfulness
🙏	Nhờ bạn giúp với 🙏	Polite request

Stickers and GIFs extend this process by replacing complete utterances. In Zalo and Messenger, users may respond with a sticker to express thanks, apology, agreement, affection, teasing, or refusal. Typography also matters: "*ĐẸP QUÁ*" creates visual intensity; "*Ok.....*" signals hesitation; "*Trờiiiii*"

approximates extended intonation. Hashtags such as "*#xuhuong*, *#review*, *#foodtour*, *#healing*", and "*#GenZ*" organize discourse, index identity, and connect individual posts to larger communities.

On short-video platforms, multimodal integration becomes even stronger. TikTok creators combine spoken narration, subtitles, background music, visual transitions, emojis, hashtags, and on-screen text. Meaning emerges from synchronized modes rather than from any single code. Vietnamese digital literacy therefore includes the ability to interpret multimodal combinations, not merely grammar and vocabulary.

4.1.4. Platform-Specific Linguistic Variation

Digital Vietnamese varies systematically across platforms because each platform offers different affordances. Facebook supports public discussion, narrative posts, comments, reactions, hashtags, and live video. Zalo emphasizes interpersonal messaging, family and workplace groups, voice messages, stickers, and conversational economy. TikTok foregrounds short-form audiovisual communication, algorithmic circulation, trend imitation, and rapid slang diffusion. YouTube supports comment-based audience participation and longer audiovisual discourse. Threads encourages concise public conversation.

Facebook Vietnamese often contains extended narrative, evaluative comments, community debate, and personal storytelling. Zalo Vietnamese tends toward ellipsis and immediate pragmatic function: "*Gửi file nhé, Đến chưa?, Ok em, Mai họp nha*". TikTok Vietnamese favors trend-driven phrases, captions, subtitles, hybrid vocabulary, and performative slang. Platform-specific variation therefore creates distinct registers within digital Vietnamese while preserving the broader linguistic system.

Table 15. *Platform-Specific Linguistic Variation in Contemporary Vietnamese Digital Communication*

Platform	Dominant communicative purpose	Linguistic characteristics	Multimodal features
Facebook	Public interaction and community discussion	Extended discourse, narrative writing, evaluative comments	Images, hyperlinks, reactions, hashtags, live video
Zalo	Interpersonal communication	Ellipsis, abbreviated expressions, conversational economy	Stickers, voice messages, emojis, file sharing
TikTok	Short-video interaction	Trend-based vocabulary, compressed discourse, persuasive openings	Video, subtitles, music, hashtags, visual effects
YouTube	Information sharing and audience engagement	Explanatory discourse, instructional language, comment interaction	Long-form video, subtitles, thumbnails, comments
Threads	Microblogging and opinion exchange	Short written statements, rapid conversational turns, topical hashtags	Text-first interface, emojis, reposts

These differences confirm Herring's (2007) argument that online discourse must be analyzed in relation to technological affordances, participation structure, audience design, and communicative purpose. Digital media does not produce one homogeneous internet Vietnamese; it produces a repertoire of platform-sensitive communicative practices.

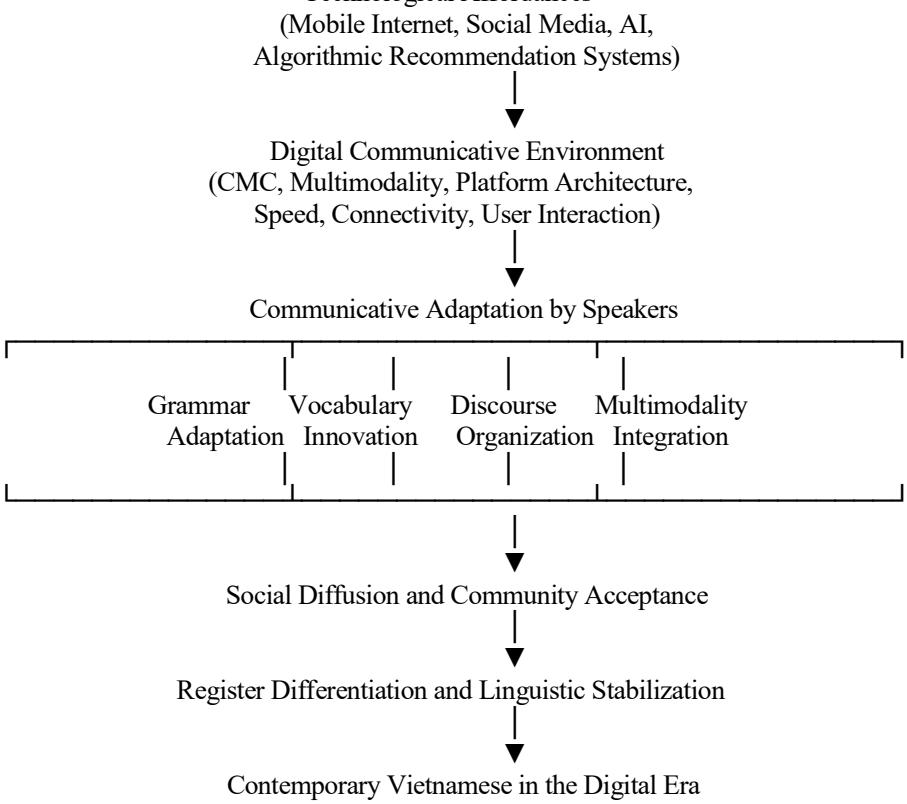
4.1.5. Integrated Model of Vietnamese Language Evolution

The results support an integrated model in which digital media acts as an accelerator rather than an independent cause of language change. Technological affordances enable new communicative practices; repeated practices encourage grammatical, lexical, pragmatic, and multimodal adaptation; social

interaction diffuses and evaluates these forms; and successful innovations become part of the repertoire of contemporary Vietnamese.

The model explains the coexistence of innovation and stability. Vietnamese shows lexical creativity, multimodal diversification, and platform-specific variation, but its core grammatical architecture remains stable. Borrowed English words conform to Vietnamese syntax; ellipsis extends existing discourse patterns; emojis and stickers supplement rather than replace linguistic expression. Digital communication therefore expands functional options while preserving structural continuity.

Figure 4. *Integrated Model of Vietnamese Language Evolution in the Digital Era*



Source: Developed by the author based on Halliday (1978), Herring (2007), Kress (2010), Crystal (2011), Walther (2011), Labov (2001), and findings of the present study.

4.2. Discussion and Implications

The central implication of the analysis is that digital media should be treated as a communicative ecology rather than a destructive external force. New platforms increase the speed, visibility, and social reach of linguistic innovation, but speakers remain active agents who adapt linguistic resources according to purpose, audience, relationship, and platform norms. This interpretation avoids technological determinism and aligns with sociolinguistic theories of variation and change (Labov, 2001).

For Vietnamese linguistics, the findings show that contemporary Vietnamese cannot be fully described through a strict spoken/written binary. Digital discourse occupies a hybrid space that combines written form, speech-like interaction, visual design, and networked participation (Crystal, 2011; Herring et al., 2013). Future Vietnamese linguistic research should therefore include platform-specific corpora, multimodal data, emoji and sticker interpretation, and sociolinguistic variables such as age, region, profession, and community membership.

For language education, the findings suggest that students should not simply be told that digital language is wrong. Instead, they should learn register awareness: ko, rep, ib, flex, đu trend, thả tim, or toxic may be effective in peer interaction but inappropriate in formal academic writing, legal documents, or professional reports. Digital literacy should include grammar, vocabulary, multimodal interpretation, audience awareness, and the ability to shift between informal online forms and standard Vietnamese.

For language technology and artificial intelligence, digital Vietnamese presents challenges for tokenization, machine translation, sentiment analysis, speech recognition, information retrieval, and large language models. Systems trained only on formal writing may misinterpret abbreviations, code-switching, emojis, slang, and platform-specific expressions. NLP resources should therefore include representative corpora from Facebook, Zalo, TikTok, YouTube, Threads, messaging applications, and forums.

For language policy, the evidence supports balanced standardization. Formal administrative, academic, educational, and legal communication should continue to maintain standard norms. At the same time, informal digital registers should be documented rather than dismissed. Updated digital dictionaries, lexical databases, corpora, and interdisciplinary collaboration among linguists, educators, software developers, and policymakers can help preserve linguistic standards while recognizing living-language innovation.

5. Conclusion

This study examined how digital media influences the evolution of contemporary Vietnamese through evidence-based synthesis of scholarship in sociolinguistics, CMC, Internet Linguistics, multimodal discourse analysis, and Vietnamese language studies. The findings demonstrate that digital media affects Vietnamese across grammar, vocabulary, discourse, multimodality, platform variation, and social function, but it does not fundamentally undermine the language's structural integrity.

Grammatically, digital communication intensifies existing tendencies toward subject ellipsis, predicate reduction, clause compression, pragmatic inference, and discourse economy. Lexically, it accelerates English borrowing, semantic extension, abbreviations, internet slang, hybrid compounds, and code-switching. Multimodally, it integrates text with emojis, stickers, GIFs, hashtags, typography, images, video, and sound. Socially, it supports identity construction, community membership, humor, intimacy, evaluation, and digital competence.

The study contributes theoretically by proposing an integrated model linking technological affordances, communicative practices, linguistic adaptation, social diffusion, and language evolution. Methodologically, it demonstrates the value of evidence-based synthesis for examining digital language change. In practical terms, it highlights implications for Vietnamese linguistics, education, language technology, and language policy.

Several limitations remain. The study relies on secondary literature rather than an original large-scale corpus; it focuses mainly on widely used platforms; it does not provide detailed demographic comparison; and the proposed model requires further empirical validation. Future research should build large multimodal corpora, conduct longitudinal analyses of emerging vocabulary, compare Vietnamese with other Southeast Asian languages, and examine how generative AI and conversational agents influence Vietnamese digital communication.

In conclusion, digital media has become an influential ecology for the ongoing evolution of contemporary Vietnamese. Rather than disrupting linguistic integrity, it promotes adaptive innovation through grammatical flexibility, lexical expansion, multimodal meaning-making, platform-specific registers, and socially meaningful variation. The future development of Vietnamese will depend not on resisting digital change but on understanding how speakers creatively adapt the language to new communicative environments.

REFERENCES

Vietnamese

1. Nguyễn Hòa (2021), *Phân tích diễn ngôn: Một số vấn đề lý luận và phương pháp*. Nhà xuất bản Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội (*Discourse Analysis: Theoretical and Methodological Issues*. Vietnam National University Press, Hanoi)
2. Nguyễn Văn Khang (2019), *Ngôn ngữ mạng-Biến thể ngôn ngữ trên mạng tiếng Việt*. Nhà xuất bản Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội (*Internet Language: Linguistic Variation in Vietnamese Online Communication*. Vietnam National University Press, Hanoi).

English

3. Aitchison, J. (2013), *Language change: Progress or decay*? (4th ed.). Cambridge University Press.
4. Barton, D., & Lee, C. (2013), Language online: Investigating digital texts and practices. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003265276.
5. Crystal, D. (2006). *Language and the Internet* (2nd ed.), Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511487002.
6. Crystal, D. (2011), Internet linguistics: A student guide. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.1075/aral.35.2.07rin.
7. Dresner, E., & Herring, S. C. (2010), Functions of the nonverbal in CMC: Emoticons and illocutionary force. Communication Theory, 20(3), 249–268. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2010.01362.x
8. Evans, V. (2017), The emoji code: The linguistics behind smiley faces and scaredy cats. Picador.
9. Gardner-Chloros, P. (2009), Code-switching. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511609787.
10. Halliday, M. A. K. (1978), Language as social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning. Edward Arnold.
11. Herring, S. C. (Ed.). (1996), Computer-mediated communication: Linguistic, social, and cross-cultural perspectives. John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/pbns.39
12. Herring, S. C. (2004), Computer-mediated discourse analysis: An approach to researching online behavior. In S. A. Barab, R. Kling, & J. H. Gray (Eds.), Designing for virtual communities in the service of learning (pp. 338–376). Cambridge University Press.
13. Herring, S. C. (2007), A faceted classification scheme for computer-mediated discourse. Language@Internet, 4, Article 1. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/31590573_A_Faceted_Classification_Scheme_for_Computer-Mediated_Discourse.
14. Herring, S. C., Stein, D., & Virtanen, T. (Eds.). (2013), Pragmatics of computer-mediated communication. De Gruyter Mouton. https://www.scribd.com/document/585182677/Pragmatics-of-Computer-Mediated-Communication.
15. Hymes, D. (1972), On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), Sociolinguistics: Selected readings (pp. 269–293). Penguin.
16. Jewitt, C. (Ed.). (2014), The Routledge handbook of multimodal analysis (2nd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2010.03.003.
17. Kress, G. (2010), Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2011.06.013.
18. Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2021), Reading images: The grammar of visual design (3rd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003099857.
19. Labov, W. (1994), Principles of linguistic change: Internal factors. Blackwell.
20. Labov, W. (2001), Principles of linguistic change: Social factors. Blackwell.

21. Page, M. J., et al. (2021), The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. BMJ, 372, n71. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71.
22. Sproull, L., & Kiesler, S. (1986), Reducing social context cues: Electronic mail in organizational communication. Management Science, 32(11), 1492–1512. https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.32.11.1492.
23. Tagliamonte, S. A., & Denis, D. (2008), Linguistic ruin? LOL! Instant messaging and teen language. American Speech, 83(1), 3–34. https://doi.org/10.1215/00031283-2008-001
24. Thompson, L. C. (1987), A Vietnamese reference grammar. University of Hawai'i Press.
25. Thurlow, C., & Mroczek, K. (Eds.). (2011), Digital discourse: Language in the new media. Oxford University Press.
26. Walther, J. B. (1996), Computer-mediated communication: Impersonal, interpersonal, and hyperpersonal interaction. Communication Research, 23(1), 3–43. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/284193126_Computer-mediated_communication_Impersonal_interpersonal_and_hyperpersonal
27. Walther, J. B. (2011), Theories of computer-mediated communication and interpersonal relations. In M. L. Knapp & J. A. Daly (Eds.), The SAGE handbook of interpersonal communication (4th ed., pp. 443–479). SAGE.
28. Xiao, Y., & Watson, M. (2019), Guidance on conducting a systematic literature review. Journal of Planning Education and Research, 39(1), 93–112. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319343044_Guidance_on_Conducting_a_Systematic_Literature_Review.

Truyền thông số và sự thích nghi ngôn ngữ trong tiếng Việt đương đại: Phân tích dựa trên minh chứng về biến đổi ngữ pháp, từ vựng và giao tiếp đa phương thức

Tóm tắt: Sự phát triển nhanh chóng của truyền thông số đã làm thay đổi môi trường giao tiếp của tiếng Việt đương đại, thúc đẩy quá trình đổi mới ngôn ngữ trên các phương diện ngữ pháp, từ vựng, diễn ngôn và giao tiếp đa phương thức. Bài viết tổng hợp có hệ thống các nghiên cứu thuộc lĩnh vực biến đổi ngôn ngữ, ngôn ngữ học xã hội, giao tiếp qua máy tính, ngôn ngữ học Internet và ký hiệu học xã hội nhằm phân tích tác động của mạng xã hội và các nền tảng số đối với tiếng Việt hiện nay. Kết quả cho thấy truyền thông số không làm thay đổi cấu trúc cơ bản của tiếng Việt mà chủ yếu thúc đẩy sự thích nghi trong sử dụng ngôn ngữ thông qua hiện tượng tỉnh lược, đổi mới từ vựng, vay mượn tiếng Anh, viết tắt, tiếng lóng, biểu tượng cảm xúc và các phương thức giao tiếp đa phương thức. Trên cơ sở đó, bài viết đề xuất mô hình tích hợp giải thích mối quan hệ giữa đặc điểm công nghệ, thực hành giao tiếp, sự thích nghi ngôn ngữ, chức năng xã hội và sự phát triển của tiếng Việt đương đại.

Từ khóa: Truyền thông số; tiếng Việt đương đại; biến đổi ngôn ngữ; giao tiếp qua máy tính; ngôn ngữ học Internet; giao tiếp đa phương thức; ngôn ngữ học xã hội.