Vietnamese slang expressions

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Nowadays, in Vietnam, many people, especially adolescents, often use slang expressions in their daily life. It seems that these slang expressions can convey more vivid and more understandable meanings among the users than the ordinary vocabulary items. Some words denote impolite meanings or actions. Some convey subtle meanings. Some slang expressions are short-lived and are replaced by others which are introduced into the language of the society.

The Vietnamese word for "slang" is "tiếng lóng" /tiəŋ change note lɔŋ/]. These slang expressions have been collected by me item by item during my stay in Hanoi from December 1997 till February 1998 and total more than 100 items. In this paper all the data will be classified according to the functions and meanings. The English meaning, the example sentence and most of the ordinary word(s) are presented relating to each slang expression. Some words can be used both as slang and as ordinary words with no slang meaning attached to them.

Adverbs: Slang expressions which function as adverbs modify the verbs as in:

1. ăc /ak 5/ "well"

\begin{verbatim}
Bản  chơi  ăc  thật.
/băn5/ chaj1  ak5/ that6/
friend  play  well  true
NP  V  AdvP  AdvP
"You play really well."
\end{verbatim}

2. Śa hoa /ba1 hwa1/ "boastful and talkative"

\begin{verbatim}
Mắt  chỉ  gái  ba hoa  thôi.
/maj3/ chi3  zoi3  ba4 hwa1/ thoj1/
you  only  skilled  boastful  only
NP  AdvP  V  AdvP  AdvP
"You are only skillful in boasting."
\end{verbatim}

The ordinary word is hay nọi /haj1 noj5/
3. **bụi /bụi⁶/ “depraved”**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Con} & \quad \text{bé} & \quad \text{trông} & \quad \text{bụi} & \quad \text{thật.} \\
/kôn^1 & \quad \text{be}^5 & \quad \text{chọn}^1 & \quad \text{bụi}^6 & \quad \text{thật}^6/ \\
\text{clf} & \quad \text{child} & \quad \text{look} & \quad \text{deprave} & \quad \text{real} \\
\text{NP} & \quad \text{V} & \quad \text{AdvP} & \quad \text{AdvP} \\
\end{align*}
\]

"The child looks really depraved."

The literary meaning of **bụi** is “dust”. It is related to the bad behavior of a person. The ordinary word is **không tốt /kôn⁷ tot⁵/**.

4. **dật đéo /zat⁶ zew⁶/ “bad”**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Thằngőn} & \quad \text{dổ} & \quad \text{trông} & \quad \text{dật đéo} & \quad \text{lám.} \\
/\text{than}^2 \text{on}^1 & \quad \text{dổ}^5 & \quad \text{chọn}^1 & \quad \text{zat}^6 \text{zew}^6 & \quad \text{lam}^5/ \\
youngster & \quad \text{that} & \quad \text{look} & \quad \text{bad} & \quad \text{very} \\
\text{NP} & \quad \text{V} & \quad \text{AdvP} & \quad \text{AdvP} \\
\end{align*}
\]

"That young boy looks very bad."

5. **gắt /yat⁵/ “well”**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Câu} & \quad \text{choi} & \quad \text{gắt} & \quad \text{the}^5/ \\
/kaw^6 & \quad \text{chøj}^1 & \quad \text{yat}^5 & \quad \text{the}^5/ \\
you & \quad \text{play} & \quad \text{well} & \quad \text{part} \\
\text{NP} & \quad \text{V} & \quad \text{AdvP} & \quad \text{PART} \\
\end{align*}
\]

"You play so well."

The ordinary words are **hay /haj¹/, tốt /tot⁵/**.

6. **ghê tôm /ye¹ tóm³/ “disgusting”**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Con} & \quad \text{bé} & \quad \text{trông} & \quad \text{ghê tôm.} \\
/kôn^1 & \quad \text{be}^5 & \quad \text{chọn}^1 & \quad \text{ye}^1 \text{tóm}^3/ \\
\text{child} & \quad \text{look} & \quad \text{disgusting} \\
\text{NP} & \quad \text{V} & \quad \text{AdvP} \\
\end{align*}
\]

"The child looks disgusting."

The ordinary words are **nhìn sọ the /nin² só⁶ the⁵/, bán bán /ban³ ban³/**.

7. **ngon /nôn¹/ “good, high quality”**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Xe} & \quad \text{này} & \quad \text{di} & \quad \text{ngon} & \quad \text{lám.} \\
/se^1 & \quad \text{naj}^2 & \quad \text{di}^1 & \quad \text{nôn}^1 & \quad \text{lam}^5/ \\
\text{car} & \quad \text{this} & \quad \text{go} & \quad \text{easy} & \quad \text{very} \\
\text{NP} & \quad \text{V} & \quad \text{AdvP} & \quad \text{AdvP} \\
\end{align*}
\]

"This car is very good."

The ordinary word is **chất lượng cao /chat⁵ luông⁶ karw¹/**.
8. **nhu com bûa** /nu2 kəm1 buaʔwaʔ4/ “often”

```
Nó thay dói nguôi yêu nhu com bûa.
/nu5 thaj1 doj3 nuaj2 tiew1 nu1 kəm1 buaʔwaʔ4/
he change lover often
NP V NP AdvP
“He changes his lovers often.”
```

The slang expression **nhu com bûa** has the literary meaning “like a daily meal” which is the daily behavior. The ordinary word is **hay/haj**.

9. **nuôt** /nuət6/ “nice, well”

```
Cô ta nhìn nuôt thật chặt trách bao nhiêu
/ko1 ta1 pin2 nuət6 thaj3 chaʔ3 chaʔ5 barw1 niəw1/
she look nice real not reproach for how much
NP V AdvP AdvP NEG V Q
đàn ông đô xố vào.
dan2 onj1 do3 so1 vaw2/
male flock into
NP V P
“She is nice that’s why a lot of boys flock to flirt with her.”
```

The ordinary words are **giói** /zaj3/, **tô** /tət5/, **để** /de6/.

10. **phot phêt** /fət6 fət6/ “bad”

```
Bây giờ nô học hành photphêt làm.
/baj1 zaʔ2 no5 hōk6 hap2 fət6 fət6 lam5/
now he study bad very
AdvP NP V AdvP AdvP
“Now he studies very badly.”
```

The ordinary word are **nhin ghê** /ni2 ye1/, **trông sô thể** /choŋ1 sa6 the5/.

11. **tăng tatu** /tən2 taww6/ “adultery”

```
Anh đi tăng tatu với con nào thế?
/ap1 di1 tən2 taww6 vəj5 kən1 naw2 the5/
you go adultery with girl which so
NP V AdvP PP AdvP
“Did you commit adultery with any girl?”
```

The ordinary word is **ngoai tinh** /ŋwaj6 tın2/.
12. **trâu** /caw¹/ “violent in playing”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tao</th>
<th>không</th>
<th>giăm</th>
<th>đá</th>
<th>bóng</th>
<th>với</th>
<th>bọn</th>
<th>nó</th>
<th>vì</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/taaw¹</td>
<td>xo^n¹</td>
<td>zam⁵</td>
<td>da⁵</td>
<td>bon⁵</td>
<td>vOj⁵</td>
<td>bon⁶</td>
<td>no⁵</td>
<td>vi²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I not</td>
<td>dare</td>
<td>play</td>
<td>football</td>
<td>with</td>
<td>group</td>
<td>he</td>
<td>because</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Conj</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**bon⁶** no⁵ da⁵ trâu⁴ lâm⁵.

**bon⁶** no⁵ da⁵ chaw¹ lâm⁵.

**group** he kick violent very

**AdvP** **AdvP**

“I do not dare to play football with his group because they play very violently.”

The ordinary words are **thô bao** /tho¹ baw⁶/, **thô’ bi** /tho³ bi³/.

13. **xông xênh** /soⁿ¹ seⁿ¹/ “generous”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thoṅg</th>
<th>cha</th>
<th>đồ</th>
<th>ăn tiêu</th>
<th>xông xênh</th>
<th>lâm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/thaŋ²</td>
<td>char¹</td>
<td>do⁵</td>
<td>an tiow¹</td>
<td>seⁿ¹ seⁿ¹</td>
<td>lâm⁵</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**he** that spend generous very

**AdvP** **AdvP**

“He is very generous.”

The ordinary word is **thodi mái** /thwa³ maj⁵/.

Verbs: In the following section verbs used in slang expressions have been divided into two groups, (i) stative verbs, and (ii) funtive verbs.

i) **Stative verbs** are verbs which can be preposed by the degree marker such as rát “very”, hót “a little”, khé “pretty, rather” and can be postposed by the degree marker such as lâm “very”, núa”more”.

14. **ám đau** /am⁵ daw²/ “mad”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Máy</th>
<th>ám</th>
<th>đau</th>
<th>à?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/maj²</td>
<td>am⁵</td>
<td>daw²</td>
<td>au²/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**you** mad **Q**

**NP** **V** **Q**

“Are you mad?”

The literary meaning of the slang ám đau is “have a light fever”. It is related to the madness. The ordinary word is **hâm hâm** /ham¹ ham¹/.
15. cáo già /karw5 za2/ “tricky”

Thời đùng có tin nó, thằng cha ấy cáo già làm.
/tho1j1 danh2 ko5 tin1 no5 than2 cha1 a5 karw5 za2 lam5/
stop not have believe he guy that tricky very
VP NEG V V NP NP V AdvP
“Stop. Don’t believe him. He is very foxy.”

The literary meaning of cáo già is “old fox”.

16. co với /ko1 voj2/, chồn /chon2/”, guôm /gum2/ “afraid, panic”

Nếu máy liều chết bon nó sể co với ngày.
/new5 maj2 liow2 chet5 bon6 no5 se7e4 ko1 voj2 naj1/
if you reckless group they will afraid suddenly
Conj NP V NP NP AUX V AdvP
“If you are reckless, they will be afraid.”

17. cay đắng /kaj1 dan5/ “miserable”

Cuộc sống thất cay đắng.
/kwok6 son5 that6 kaj1 dan5/
clf life real miserable
NP AdvP V
“Life is very miserable.”

The literary meaning of cay đắng is “bitter”. The ordinary word is dau kho /daw1 xo1/.

18. chanh chua /ca1 cu1/“sharp tongued”

Chỉ ta rất chanh chua.
/chi6 ta1 ra5 chan1 chu61/
she very sharp tongued
NP AdvP V
“She is very sharp-tongued.”

This slang expression chanh chua means “sour lemon”.

19. chat /chat 5/ “expensive”

Giá chat.
/za5 chat5/
price expensive
NP V
“The price is expensive.”

The ordinary word is dat /dat5/.
20. **chợt /chọt/ “bugger or bastard”**

```
Thằng ấy **chợt** làm.
/thâŋ̂ chọt lam/ 
he **chợt** very 
NP V AdvP 
“That bugger is very snotty.”
```

The literary meaning is “Dead dog.”

21. **cháo /cháw/ “be afraid”**

```
Mày **cháo** không gián đi xe máy à?
/mây cháo xoŋ zam di xe maj̄ a2/ 
you be afraid not go motorbike Q 
NP V NEG V V NP Q 
“Do you not dare to go by motorbike?”
```

The ordinary word is **sọ /sọ6/**.

22. **chùn /chun2/ “panic”**

```
Mày **lai** **chùn** à?
/mây lai chun a2/ 
you again panic Q 
NP AdvP V Q 
“You are panicked again, aren’t you?”
```

23. **đẹ cự /zę1 ku6/ “lustful”**

```
Thằng cha ấy **đẹ cự** thật.
/thâŋ̂ cha1 aj̄ đẹ cũ thạt̄6/ 
youngster lustful real 
NP V AdvP 
“He is really lustful.”
```

The literary meaning of this slang is “old goat” which is related to the lustful behavior.

24. **đông dài /zon1 zaij2/ “waste time”**

```
Không nên **đông dài** như vậy.
/xon1 nen zon1 zaij2 nhu vaj̄6/ 
not should waste time like that 
NEG AUX V AdvP NP 
“(You) should not waste time like that.”
```
25. ɗā /ɗaʔa⁴/ “wonderful, good”

"This food is very good."

The ordinary word is tōt /tɔt⁵/.

26. ɗī thōa /ɗiʔi⁴ thwaʔa⁴/ “lustful”

"He is already old but lustful."

27. dīnh /dɪŋ¹/ “difficult”

"This math lesson is very difficult."

The ordinary word is thōng minh /thɔŋ¹ mɪŋ¹/.

28. ghē /ye¹/ “intelligent”

"He is intelligent. (You) can’t cheat him."

The ordinary word is thōng minh /thɔŋ¹ mɪŋ¹/.

29. gio’ hoi /zɔ³ həj¹/ “cracked”

"He is cracked."

The ordinary word is hâm hâm /həm¹ həm¹/. 
30. hâm tải /hə²m ɻəm⁴ təj²/ “unlucky”

Hôm nay, gáp con bé áy hâm tải lâm.
/home¹ nay¹ gap⁶ kon¹ bé⁵ my² həm² təj² ləm⁵/
today meet she unlucky very
AdvP V NP V AdvP

“Meet her today is very unlucky.”

The ordinary word is không may /kəŋ¹ məj¹/.

31. hết đan /het⁵ dam⁶/ “short of money”

Vào nhà hàng ăn tối đi.
/var² nə həŋ² an¹ təj⁵ di¹/
enter restaurant eat dinner go
V NP VP IMP

“Have dinner in the restaurant.”

- Đừng hết đan.
/dam⁵ het⁵ dam⁶/ prog finish money
AUX VP

“I am short of money.”

32. học bùa /hoːk⁵ bwə⁵/ “difficult”

Bài thi học bùa quá.
/bat⁵ thi¹ hoːk⁵ bwə⁵ kwə²/
examination difficult very
NP V AdvP

“The examination is very difficult.”

The ordinary word is khó /kə²/.

33. họng hách /həŋ⁵ hac⁵/ “bossy”

Cho nó một tranh, nó quá họng hách.
/cho¹ nə⁵ mot⁶ tran⁶ nə⁵ kwə⁵ həŋ² hac⁵/
give he one match he very bossy
V NP NP NP AdvP V

“Give him one match. He is very bossy.”

The ordinary word is cậy quyen /kəj⁶ kwəj²/ .

34. hệi /həi²/ “profitable”

Lâm việc cho anh ta rất hệi.
/lam² viək⁶ cho¹ an⁴ tə¹ zət⁵ həi²/
do work for he very profitable
V NP PP AdvP V

“Working for him is very profitable.”
The ordinary word is lọi /lɔj⁶/.

35. khù khuaâm /xu²-xwam²/ “terrible”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Đòi</th>
<th>no</th>
<th>cu⁴</th>
<th>khù khuaâm</th>
<th>the⁵</th>
<th>dọj⁵</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/dɔj²</td>
<td>nɔ⁵</td>
<td>ku⁵</td>
<td>xu²-xwam²</td>
<td>the⁵</td>
<td>dọj⁵</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
life he part terrible so part
NP PART V AdvP PART

“Life is so terrible.”

The ordinary word is kho’ /xɔ³/.

36. ki bo /ki¹ bo¹/ “stingy”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thang cha</th>
<th>nay</th>
<th>ki bo</th>
<th>lam⁵</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/than² cha¹</td>
<td>nay²</td>
<td>ki¹ bo¹</td>
<td>lam⁵</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
guy this stingy very
NP V AdvP

“He is very stingy.”

The ordinary word is kêt xi /kɛt⁶ si³/.

37. lém /lɛm⁵/ “intelligent (in speaking)”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thang bé</th>
<th>it</th>
<th>tuo³</th>
<th>nhung</th>
<th>lém</th>
<th>lam⁵</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/than² be⁵</td>
<td>it⁵</td>
<td>tʊəj⁳</td>
<td>nʊŋ¹</td>
<td>lɛm⁵</td>
<td>lam⁵</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
boy little age but intelligent very
NP AdvP NP Conj V AdvP

“The boy is young but (he is) very intelligent.”

The ordinary word is khéo môm /xɛw⁵ mom²/.

38. lua /lua⁶/ “well”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mày</th>
<th>lai</th>
<th>xe</th>
<th>rάi</th>
<th>lua</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/mæ⁵</td>
<td>laj⁵</td>
<td>se¹</td>
<td>zət⁵</td>
<td>lua⁶</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
you drive car very well
NP V NP AdvP V

“You drive a car very well.”

The ordinary words are khéo /xɛw⁵/, gioi /zɔj³/.

39. ma cô /ma¹ ko¹/ “tricky”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thang cha</th>
<th>ma cô</th>
<th>lam⁵</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/than² cha¹</td>
<td>ma¹ ko¹</td>
<td>lam⁵</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
man tricky very
NP V AdvP

“He is very tricky.”
40. **máu** /maw⁵/ “sexy”

```
Con be Con be máu máu laím laím ta'n ta'n luan6 luan6 di di
/kon¹ be⁵ maw⁵ lam⁵ tan⁵ luən⁶ di¹/
she sexy very court immediately part
NP V AdvP V AdvP PART
```

“She is very sexy. Court (her) immediately.”

The ordinary word is **khieu đam** /khiəw¹ zam¹/.

41. **mat chat** /mat⁵ chat⁵/ “degenerated”

```
Nò dao ngày mat chat chat laim.
/no⁵ zəw⁶ naj² mat⁵ chat⁵ lam⁵/
he nowadays degenerate very
NP AdvP V AdvP
```

“Nowadays he has become very degenerate.”

The ordinary word is **tro nén xâu** /chə³ nen¹ saw⁵/.

42. **mi mân** /mi³ mən⁴/ “great or wonderful”

```
Kế qua dá' t duoc thé' thé' mi mân.
/ket⁵ kwə³ dat⁶ duək⁶ the⁶ mi⁷ mən⁴/
result place able real great
NP V PostV AdvP V
```

“The obtained result is wonderful.”

The ordinary word is **tuyêt** /twiət⁶/.

43. **qui quyêt** /kwə³ kwət⁶/ “dishonest, deceitful”

```
Cô gái dó qui quyêt laim.
/kə¹ Yaj⁵ do⁵ kwə³ kwət⁶ lam⁵/
girl that dishonest very
NP V AdvP
```

“That girl is very dishonest.”

The ordinary word is **lua** /lwə⁶/.

44. **ranh ma** /zən¹ ma¹/ “tricky”

```
Con be ranh ma laım khong sao lua duoc nə
/kon¹ be⁵ zən¹ ma¹ lam⁵ xoŋ¹ saw¹ luə² duək⁶ nə⁵/
child tricky very not why deceive able he
NP V AdvP NEG Q V PostV NP
```

“She is too tricky to be cheated.”
The ordinary word is khôn ngoan /xon¹ nhãm¹/.

45. son /son¹/ “lucky”

Số câu son the tan có nào cùng đỏ.

/[so⁵ kaw⁶ son¹ the⁵ tan⁵ ko¹ naːw² ku⁴ do³/ fate you lucky so flirt girl which also shoot
NP NP V AdvP V NP RelP AdvP V

“You have a lucky fate, so you are able to flirt with every girl.”

The ordinary word is may /maj¹/.

46. tà diën /ta⁵ diən²/ “hick”

Tao ăn mặc the này nhìn có tà diën không?

/[taʳ¹ an¹ mak⁶ the⁵ naj² pin² ko⁵ ta⁵ diən² xon¹/ I dress like this look hick Q
NP V AdvP NP V Q V Q

“When I dress like this, do I look like a rural person?”

The ordinary words are quê mùa /kwe¹ muə²/, nông thôn /mən¹ thon¹/.

47. tinh tướng /tijn¹ tuən⁵/, vi tình /vi¹ tijn⁵/ “vain”

Mày tinh tướng the.

/[maj² tijn¹ tuən⁵ the⁵/ you painful so
NP V AdvP

“You are so vain.”

48. xướng (xâu) /xuən¹ (saw³)/ “difficult”

Bài tập nay xướng(xâu) làm.

/[baj² tap⁶ naj² suən¹ saw³ lam⁵/ lesson this difficult very
NP V AdvP

“This lesson is very difficult.”

ii) Functive verbs are verbs which denote activities.

49. ấn /an¹/ “win or solve”

Bài toán nay khó làm

/[baj² twan⁵ naj² xo⁵ lam⁵/ lesson mathematics this difficult very
NP V AdvP
mây có ăn được không?
maž² kɔ⁵ an¹ dwɔk⁶ xoŋ¹/
you solve be able Q
NP Q V PostV Q
“This mathematics exercise is difficult, are you able to solve it?”

The literary meaning of ăn is “to eat”. The ordinary word is làm /l’am²/, gidi quyèt /zaŋ³ kwɔt⁵/.

50..bam càng /bam⁵ kaŋ²/ “to accompany”

Di đâu đây? Cho tỏ bám càng với.
/di¹ daw¹ daŋ⁵ cho¹ tɔ⁵ bam⁵ kaŋ² vaŋ⁵/
go where part give I be accompany for with
V NP Part V NP V P
“Where are (you) going? Let me accompany you.”

The ordinary word is đi cùng /di¹ kuŋ²/ “go together”.

51. bién /biøn⁵/ “clear off, to tell someone to go away”

Mày bién di.
/maj² biøn⁵ di¹/
you piss off part
NP V part
“Go away.”

The ordinary word is đi /di¹ di¹/.

52. bip /biøp⁶/ “tricky”

Thằng dạy tài bip người khác.
/thaŋ⁵ laŋ² tai⁴ bip⁶ nɯoŋ² xaŋ⁵ /
guy this talent tricky person other
NP V V NP
“This guy is talented in cheating other people.”

The ordinary word is lùa /luœ²/.

53. bàng /bun²/ “not pay a debt”

Tao không cho vay đâu, mây hay.
/tarw¹ xoŋ¹ cho¹ vaŋ¹ dwɔk¹ maž² haŋ¹
I not for lend part you frequently
NP NEG P V Part NP AdvP

bàng làm.
bun² lam⁵ /
not pay the debt very
V AdvP
“I do not lend (you money), because you frequently do not repay the debt.”
54. cà đêu /ka^2 dew^3/ “irritate”

Mây muơn cà đêu tao à?
/maj^2 muon^5 ka^2 dew^3 tarw^1 a2^1/
you want irrate I Q
NP V V NP Q
“Do you want to irritate me?”

The ordinary meaning is chôc tucer /coc^6 tuk^5/.

55. cày /ka^2/ “to save money”

Đô nay anh ấy cày nhiều qua đ.
/do^6 naj^2 an^1 aj^3 ka^2 niow^2 kwa^5/
period this he save a lot many
AdvP NP V AdvP
“This period he saves a lot of money”

56. chây lâng /chay^6 lam^2/ “not pay a debt”

Không cho may vay đầu, may luôn chây lâng.
/xon^1 cho^1 maj^2 vaj^1 daw^1 maj^2 luon^1 chaj^6 lam^2/
not give you lend part you always avoid paying a debt
NEG V NP V Part NP AdvP V
“(I) do not lend (you some money), you always avoid paying a debt.”

The literary meaning of the slang chây lâng is “run (around) the village”. It means that the borrower escapes from paying money back by running around the village.

57. chăn đắt /chan^1 zat^5/ “A pimp guards the prostitutes in order to earn money.”

Con dý bi thăng dý chăn đắt.
/kon^1 aj^5 bi^6 than^2 aj^5 chan^1 zat^5/
she suffer man guard
NP AUX NP V
“She is being controlled by that fellow.”

The literary meaning of this slang expression is “tend” but when it is related to the pimp, it conveys a violent guarding. The ordinary meaning is tú bà /tu^5 ba^2/.

58. chạc tàng /chak^5 tan^5/ “depraved, degenerate”

Con dý chạc tàng làm.
/kon^1 aj^5 chak^5 tan^5 lam^5/
she depraved very
NP V AdvP
“She is very depraved.”
The ordinary word is ăn chởi /ăn1 chọi1/.

59. cua /kua1/ “to flirt”

Mấy có cua được con đó không?
/maj2 kɔ5 kua1 duɔk6 kon1 dɔ5 xoŋ1/
you flirt able chick that Q
NP Q V PostV NP Q
“Are you able to flirt with that girl?”

The ordinary word is tân /tam5/.

60. cho đi đầu bay giấy /cho1 di1 taw2 baj1 zaŋ5/ “to flatter”

Đừng cho tôi đi đầu bay giấy.
/dunŋ2 cho1 toj1 di1 taw2 baj1 zaŋ5/
not give I flatter
NEG V NP V
“Don’t flatter me.”

The ordinary word is nịnh /niŋŋ6/.

61. chém /chem5/ “rip off, charge too high a price for something”

Bây giờ mua bán phải mặc cả, cán thân chú bốn nó
/baŋ1 zo2 mum1 bɔŋ5 faŋ3 mak6 kaŋ3 thanŋ6 chuŋ5 bɔŋ6 noŋ5
now buy sell must bargain careful if not gang it
AdvP V V AUX V AdvP Conj NP
chém kinh lâm.
chem5 kɨŋ1 lam5/
rip off frighten very
V AdvP AdvP
“Now (you) have to bargain carefully when (you) buy (things), if not they will over charge you very frightfully.”

The ordinary word is đói giá cao /dɔŋ2 zaŋ5 karŋ1/.

62. chươn /chuan2/ “return, come back”

Thời tôi chươn đây.
/thoŋ1 toŋ1 chuan2 dɔŋ1/
be over I come back here
V NP V AdvP
“It’s over. I will come back here.”
The ordinary word is doctrine.

63. **choi bop** /chaj¹ bop⁵/, **danh bop** /dan⁵ bop⁵/ “to have sex with prostitute”

```
Choi bop
/chaj¹ bop⁵
have sex with prostitute
V

Danh bop
/dan⁵ bop⁵

/nuj⁵
dangerous
V

/hiam³ lam⁵/
very
AdvP

“Having sex with a prostitute is very dangerous.”
```

64. **dao cuá** /daw² kuə³/ “to gain property”

```
Dao cuá
/daw² kuə³/
he dig
NP

Lo yué gi dâu muc dích cuá nó là dao cuá.
/no⁵ taw¹ zi² dau¹ muk⁶ dic⁵ kuə³ no⁵ la² daw² kuə³/
love what Part purpose of he be dig property
NP V NP Part NP V NP

“He doesn’t love her. His purpose is to gain her property.”
```

65. **di nang** /di¹ naŋ⁶/ “go to toilet”

```
Di nang
/di¹ naŋ⁶/
I go
NP V

/zoj²/
heavy
AdvP

“I already went to the toilet.”
```

The ordinary word is  doctrine.

66. **diêm dam** /diəm² dam⁶/ “sober”

```
Diêm dam
/diəm² dam⁶/
I like
NP

/nuaj²
good
AdvP

“l like a sober person.”
```

67. **di (don)** /du⁵ don⁵/ “flirting”

```
Thoi toj xin có dung có du don
/thoj¹ toj¹ sin¹ ko¹ dun² ko⁵ du⁵ don⁵
be over I ask you not have flirting
V NP V NP NEG V V

/nua.

“lt’s over. I ask you not to flirt more.”
```
68. **dùi** /dut⁵/ “fail”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hóm</th>
<th>di</th>
<th>thì</th>
<th>mình</th>
<th>không</th>
<th>làm</th>
<th>được</th>
<th>bài</th>
<th>chắc</th>
<th>là</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/hom¹</td>
<td>di¹</td>
<td>thi²</td>
<td>mình²</td>
<td>không¹</td>
<td>lam²</td>
<td>được⁶</td>
<td>bài²</td>
<td>chắc⁵</td>
<td>là²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AdvP** V Conj NP NEG V PostV NP V Conj

**dùi** thói.
dut⁵ thọj¹/
fail be over
V V

“I had an examination, but I couldn’t do it. I may fail.”

The literary meaning of **dùi** “break, cut off”. The ordinary word is **thâi bài** /that⁵ bài⁶/.

69. **đến Tết tạy** /den⁵ têj⁵ taj¹/ “in vain”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chờ</th>
<th>nó</th>
<th>thì</th>
<th>có</th>
<th>mà</th>
<th>đến</th>
<th>Tết</th>
<th>tạy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/cho²</td>
<td>no⁵</td>
<td>thi²</td>
<td>có⁵</td>
<td>mà²</td>
<td>den⁵</td>
<td>têj⁵</td>
<td>taj¹/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

wait he then have which result is in vain
V NP Conj V Conj V

“It is in vain to wait for him.”

The literary meaning of the slang **đến Tết tạy** “reach New Year Day of Westerners.” because in Vietnam, the Vietnamese do not celebrate on the first of January. New Year Day is “Tết”. The ordinary phrase is **không bao giờ xây ra** /xoŋ¹ barw¹ xiə² saj³ za¹/.

70. **gan lì** /γan¹ li²/ “wrongly persistent”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ụa</th>
<th>bé</th>
<th>quá</th>
<th>gan lì.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/duə⁵</td>
<td>be⁵</td>
<td>kwaw⁵</td>
<td>γan¹ li²/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

child too wrongly
NP AdvP V

“The child is wrongly persistent.”

71. **gạt hãi** /γat⁶ haj⁵/ “to achieve, get some profit”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chơi</th>
<th>với</th>
<th>nó</th>
<th>may</th>
<th>gạt hãi</th>
<th>được</th>
<th>gì</th>
<th>không?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/choj¹</td>
<td>vaj⁵</td>
<td>no⁵</td>
<td>maj²</td>
<td>γat⁶ haj⁵</td>
<td>được⁶</td>
<td>zi²</td>
<td>xoŋ¹/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

play with he I achieve able what not
V P P NP V PostV NP NEG

“Can you get anything by being her friend?”

The ordinary word is **kiêm được** /kiəm⁵ đukə⁶/. 
72. **hàn học** /han² hok⁶/ “burst into angry words”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sao</th>
<th>anh</th>
<th>hay</th>
<th>hàn học</th>
<th>the⁶</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/saw¹</td>
<td>ūn¹</td>
<td>haj¹</td>
<td>han² hok⁶</td>
<td>the⁵/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>why</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>often</td>
<td>burst</td>
<td>so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AdvP</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>AdvP</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>AdvP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Why do you often burst into angry words?”

The ordinary word is **quát tháo** /kwan⁵ than⁵/.

73. **huốu vuôn** /huw¹ vuɔn⁶/ “tell a lie”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mày</th>
<th>toàn</th>
<th>có</th>
<th>huốu vuôn</th>
<th>thòi.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/maj²</td>
<td>twan²</td>
<td>kɔ⁵</td>
<td>huw¹ vuɔn⁶</td>
<td>thoj¹/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>always</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>a lie telling</td>
<td>be over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>AdvP</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>PART</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“You always tell a lie.”

The ordinary word is **nói dồi** /nɔj⁵ zoj⁵/.

74. **hêt hôt** /het⁵ haj¹/ “tired, difficult, have a problem”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tồi</th>
<th>nay</th>
<th>mà</th>
<th>không</th>
<th>xong</th>
<th>thì</th>
<th>hêt hôt</th>
<th>dày.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/toj⁵</td>
<td>nɔj¹</td>
<td>ma²</td>
<td>xɔn¹</td>
<td>sɔŋ⁷</td>
<td>thi²</td>
<td>het⁵ haj¹</td>
<td>daj⁵/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evening</td>
<td>this</td>
<td>which</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>finish</td>
<td>then</td>
<td>tired</td>
<td>part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AdvP</td>
<td>Conj</td>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>Conj</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>PART</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“If it is not finished this evening, I will have a problem.”

The ordinary words are **mệt** /met⁶/, **khó khăn** /kɔ⁵ xan¹/.

75. **kênh kiêu** /ken¹ kiw⁶/ “conceit”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Xâu</th>
<th>n hut</th>
<th>ma</th>
<th>mà</th>
<th>cũng</th>
<th>kênh kiêu.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/saw⁵</td>
<td>ñu¹</td>
<td>m̃a¹</td>
<td>m̃a²</td>
<td>kufu⁴</td>
<td>ken¹ kiw⁶/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ugly</td>
<td>like</td>
<td>ghost</td>
<td>but</td>
<td>also</td>
<td>conceit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>AdvP</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>Conj</td>
<td>AdvP</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“(She is) ugly like a ghost but also conceived.”

76. **kênh kiêu** /ken¹ kiw⁶/ “to look down upon somebody”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anh díy</th>
<th>luôn luôn</th>
<th>kênh kiêu</th>
<th>ngu décor ta.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ap¹ aj⁵</td>
<td>luɔn¹ luɔn¹</td>
<td>ken¹ kiw⁶</td>
<td>nɔj¹lɔ²ar¹/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he</td>
<td>always</td>
<td>look down upon</td>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>AdvP</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>NP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“He always looks down upon people.”

The ordinary word is **kiêu** /kiw⁶/.
77. ké /ke/ “get help from someone”

```
Tỏi đi ké ở tôi câu có được không?
/TOI1 di1 ke5 oto1 kuo3 kaw6 ko5 duak6 xon1/
```

I go get a help car of you have be able Q

NP V V NP PP Q V Q

"Can I go by your car?"

The ordinary word is nhè /ne2/.

78. khôn nan /xon5 nan6/ “naughty, bad, something bad”

```
Mày khôn nan làm.
/MAJ2 xon5 nan6 lam5/
```

you naughty very

NP V AdvP

"You are very naughty."

The ordinary word is không tôi /xon1 to5/.

79. bàn tiền /ban5 tien2/ “short of money”

```
Tao bàn tiền qua.
/TAW1 ban5 tien2 kwao5/
```

I short of money very

NP V AdvP

"I am very short of money."

The ordinary word is can tiền /kan6 tien2/.

80. kích bắc /kic5 bao5/ “to tease or taunt somebody”

```
Thằng ấy chỉ giới khoán kích bắc thời.
/THAW2 aj5 chI3 zoi3 xwan3 kic5 bao5 thoi1/
```

he only skillful irritating taunt part

NP AdvP V V PART

"He is very good at irritating at others."

The ordinary word is chóc túc /cho5 tuak5/.

81. liu tiu /liw1 tiw1/ ‘merry”

```
Bác uống may cóc mà nhìn liu tiu the.
/bao5 un5 MAJ5 kok5 ma2 pin2 liw1 tiw1 the5/
```

uncle drink how many glass which look merry so

NP V AdvP NP Conj V AdvP AdvP

"How many glasses did you drink to make you look so merry?"
The ordinary word is hoi chênh chuang /hɔj¹ chɛŋ⁵ chwan⁵/.

82. luôn /luɔn⁶/ “go for a walk”

Chúng mìn⁵ luôn di¹/
/chuŋ⁵ mìn⁵ luɔn⁶ di¹/
we glide part

NP V PART

“Let’s go for a walk.”

83. mâu /mɔw⁵/ “very interested in doing something”

Tôi không mâu chói bông bàn lâm⁵/
/toj¹ xɔn¹ mɔw⁵ chɔj¹ bɔŋ⁵ bɔn² lɔm⁵/
I not too interested in play table tennis very

NP NEG V V NP AdvP

“I am not too interested in playing table tennis much.”

The ordinary word is thích /thic⁵/.

84. nát ruôu /nɔt⁵ zuɔw⁶/ “drunkard”

Thằng cha nát ruôu dây dũng lây nô.
/thaŋ² cha¹ nɔt⁵ zuɔw⁶ daj³ dun² laj⁵ nɔ⁵/
he sot part not take he

NP V PART NEG V NP

“He is a sot. Do not marry him.”

The ordinary word is say ruôu /saj¹ zuɔw⁶/.

85. ngâm /nɔm¹/ “delay to process something”

Những vấn đề mà tôi yêu cầu thì ông hiểu trưởng
/nʊʔ⁴ vɔn² de² toj¹ tʰəw¹ kɔw² on¹ hiəw⁶ chwəŋ³/
Pl problem which I request which boss

Pl NP Conj NP V Conj NP

vǎn cờn ngâm o’dó.
vɔʔ⁴ kɔn² nɔm¹ o³ dɔ⁵/
still be lazy to process over there
AdvP V AdvP

“The problems, which I have requested the boss to take care of, are still delayed over there.”

The literary meaning of ngâm is “to soak”.
86. **phè /fe¹/, xin /sin³/ “drunk”**

Oể anh lai phè/xin rôi.

/oj¹ an¹ laj⁶ fe¹ sin³ zoj²/
Inj you again drunk already
Inj NP AdvP V AdvP

“Oh! You are drunk again.”

87. **số’ khanh /sə³ xan¹/ “ladykiller”**

Dùng tin nó thằng ấy số’khanh lâm.

/dun² tin¹ nɔ⁵ than⁴ Aj⁵ sə³ xan¹ lam⁵
not believe he he lady killer very
NEG V NP NP V AdvP

bao nhiêu con gái chết vì nó rôi đây.

barw¹ niaw¹ kon¹ Yaj⁵ chet⁵ vi² nɔ⁵ zoj² dəj⁵
how many clf girl die because he already part
AdvP NP V Conj NP AdvP PART

“Don’t believe him though he is very attractive, because so many girls are sexually abused by him.”

88. **sát gái /sat⁵ Yaj⁵/ “attractive man”**

Thằng cha này sát gái thật.

/than⁴ char¹ naj² sat³ Yaj⁵ that⁶/
guy this lady killer real
NP V AdvP

“This guy is an attractive man.”

The ordinary word is **duyên /zwja⁷/**.

89. **tế /te⁵/ “go back”**

Hôm qua may té lúc nào?

/hom¹ kwa¹ maj² te⁵ luk⁵ narw²/
yesterday you go back when
AdvP NP V AdvP

“When did you go back yesterday?”

The ordinary word is **về /ve²/**.

90. **văm /vam¹/ “firm”**

Anh ấy tập luyện nhiều nên nhìn anh ấy rất văm.

/ap¹ Aj⁵ tap⁶ lwan⁶ niaw² nen¹ pin² ap¹ Aj⁵ zəj⁵ vam¹/
he drill much so look he very firm
NP V AdvP Conj V NP AdvP V

“He has practiced so much, he looks very firm.”
The ordinary word is ចឆេ /chak⁵/.

91. តែ នុលន់ /taw² nən¹/ “buy a prostitute for a short time”

The literary meaning of តែ នុលន់ is “an express train”.

92. តែ ចាម /taw² cham⁶/ “buy a prostitute for a long time”

The literary meaning of តែ ចាម is “a slow train”.

93. វែ វុន់ /ve² vuon²/ “to be dismissed”

The literary meaning of the slang វែ វុន់ is “return to the garden”. The ordinary word is ដុុី ចុះ /duəj² ko³/.

94. ងឺ បុរី /son¹ fim¹/ “finish, be over”

The ordinary word is ងឺ /son¹/.

Slang expressions denoting people take the forms of nouns and noun phrases, as follows:
95. bà xã /baʔ xaʔ/ "wife"

Bà xã nhà mình thích làm dom lam5, dom1
wife house I like do a kind of preserved fish very
NP V V NP AdvP
"My wife likes to cook this preserved fish very much."

The ordinary word is vọ/vọ6/.

96. bồ /boʔ/ "sweetheart, lover"

Dao này bồ to đàng di vắng.
/zaw⁶ naj² bo² to⁵ dam¹ di¹ v naj²/
this time lover I prog be away
AdvP NP AUX V
"Now my lover has gone away."

The word bồ in the Southern dialect means "friend". When it is used as a slang expression, the meaning is changed from the original. The lover refers to someone who has already gotten married but is engaging in a relationship with another man or woman.

97. bop /bop⁵/ "whore"

Con bop a’y trong tanh tuôj.
/kon¹ bop⁵ a’⁵ trong¹ tuôj⁵/
clf whore that look fishy
NP V AdvP
"That prostitute looks terrible."

98. ca ve /ka¹ ve¹/ "whore"

Nô làm ca ve.
/nô⁵ lam² ka¹ ve¹/
she do whore
NP V NP
"She is a prostitute."

The ordinary word is gái điếm /gaʔ diem⁵ diem⁵/.

99. bồ làc /boʔ laʒ⁶/ "A rural girl comes to city so she is very silly"

Nhuống con bồ làc dể bi liu⁴
/huʔ/ kon² bo² laʒ⁶ de⁴ bi⁶ liu²/
pl clf rural girl easy suffer deceive
NP AdvP AUX V
"These rural girls are easy deceived."
The literary meaning of the slang is "The cow loses the way". The ordinary word is gài quê/γaî5 kwê1/.

100. bà giâ /bâ2 zaî2/ "mother"

Bà giâ
câu
lâm
gi?
/bâ2 zaî2
kaw6
lam2
zi2/
mother you do what
NP V Q
“What is your mother doing?”

The literary meaning of bà giâ is "old lady". The ordinary word is me/mê5/.

101. con ây /kon1 aj5/ "chick" (woman)

Con ây
trọng
án chôi
lâm.
/kon1 aj5
chôn
an1 chôj1
lâm5/
chick look playgirl very
NP V NP AdvP
“She looks like a playgirl.”

The ordinary word is cô gài /ko1 γaî5/.

102. chan gộ /chan1 yolo4/ "a helper"

Tôi rãt yêu cô ây, câu lâm chan gộ cho tôi nhê.
/toj1 zaî5 tiəw1 ko1 aj5 kaw6 lam2 chan1 yolo4 cho1 toj1 pe5/
I very love she you do helper for I part
NP AdvP V NP V NP PP PART
“I love her very much. You help me to flirt with her.”

The literary meaning of chan gộ is "wooden leg" which means to be a supporter who helps other people covertly. The ordinary word is ngudi moifier γuəj2 moj5/.

103. com buì /kəm1 buj6/ "cheap meal sold beside the road"

Hôm nay nhà ta dî án com bui.
/hom1 naj1 pa2 ta1 di1 an1 kəm1 buj6/
today family go eat rice dust
AdvP NP V V NP
“Today our family goes to eat street food.”

The literary meaning of com buì is "dusty rice". This usage conveys the idea of the cheap meal sold beside the road. The ordinary meaning is com bính đăn /kəm1 bîj2 zon1/.
104. dāu /gau/ [daw⁴ yaw⁵], phui /fuŋ³/ "gangster"

Nó lá dāu gau o’ truong nay.

/na⁵ la² daw⁴ yaw⁵ o³ chuŋ² naŋ²/
he be gangster at university this
NP V NP PP
“He is a gangster at this university.”

The ordinary word is du /zu¹ kon¹/.

105. gā /yaʔa⁴/ “guy”

Sau khi say ruʔu gā ta luön danh və.

/sawⁱ xi¹ saj¹ zua⁶ yaʔa⁴ ta¹ luoen¹ daŋ⁵ vo⁵/
after get drunk guy always beat wife
AdvP V NP AdvP V NP
“After getting drunk, this guy always beats his wife.”

The ordinary word is anh /aŋ¹ aj⁵/.

106. ông già /oŋ¹ za²/ “father”

Ông già mình làm giáo viên.

/oŋ¹ za² miŋ² lam² zaw⁵ vien¹/
father I do teacher
NP V NP
“My father is a teacher.”

The ordinary word is bo /bo⁵/.

107. pho’ /fu³/ “adulterous boy/ girl”

Anh lai chán com thém pho’ roi phái không?

/ap¹ laj⁶ cham⁵ kam¹ them² fo³ zoj² faŋ³ xoŋ¹/
you again bore rice noodle already Q
NP AdvP V NP AdvP Q
“Did you commit adultery with anyone?”

The ordinary word is nguoi /nuoŋ² tin⁵/.

108. thang cha /thaŋ² cha¹/ “fellow”

Thang cha nin viem the’

/thaŋ² cha¹ nin² viam¹ the⁵/
man look inflame so
NP V V AdvP
“The man looks angry.”
The ordinary words are *anh dý /aŋ¹ ʔaj⁵/*, *òng dý /oŋ¹ ʔaj⁵/.*

109. **thàng ón** /thañ² on¹/ “calling a man whom you hate much”

`Thàng ón dây khôn nan lâm.`

/gña² on¹ dâj⁵ xon⁵ nam⁶ lam⁵/
guy that disgust very

NP V AdvP

“That guy is very disgusting.”

The ordinary words are *anh dý /aŋ¹ ʔaj⁵/*, *òng dý /oŋ¹ ʔaj⁵/.*

The highest number of slang expressions are verbs which convey both state and action, while the numbers with adverbs and nouns are quite similar. Most slang expressions refer to sexual behavior which may be regarded by society as bad and unusual. Some slang expressions convey the simple meanings or modify the actions. These are known and used by certain groups of people. They also reflect how the language has been developing to become more lively and colourful.

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