

Analysis of Slang Words Used in Movie Script “Lady Bird”: Sociolinguistics Study

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Abstract

The research entitled “Analysis of Slang Words Used in the Script of the Film “Lady Bird”: Sociolinguistic Study is concerned with the use of language in everyday life, which closely provides additional information used in the film. The purpose of this study is analyzed and examine closely the type of slang words that occur in the movie Lady Bird and the reasons behind of it. The method used in carrying out the study was a descriptive analysis method. The data used were taken from the Greta Gerwig’s movie script classify the data into their types used theory from Chapman (1988) and the reasons of the character using the slang were analysed by using theory from Allan & Burridge (2006). The results demonstrated that there are two types of slang words, namely primary slang (84%) and secondary slang (16%). Besides, there are seven reasons, namely To Address, To Form Intimate Atmosphere, To Initiate Relax Conversation, To Show Impression, To Show Intimacy, To Reveal Anger, and To Humiliate. In fact, the analysis reveal primary slang is the most used slang that emerges frequently in Lady Bird context due to the expression which commonly used in daily conversation.

Keywords

slang words; sociolinguistics;
movies; movie script; lady bird



I. Introduction

Language is one of the most important things in the life of every human being (Purba, N. et al. (2020). Language is the main tool used by humans to communicate with each other. Since human are a social being, people need to communicate to exchange information for the sake of living. Language allows people transfer messages or deliver information as a bridge to ensure the communication and participation of all people who are a part of a territory or nation. Through language, People can create a relationship with other people as we want to share thoughts, ideas or to express feeling with other people. It cannot be separated from humans or society. Hudson (1996) stated that Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics focused on the study of socially related languages. Furthermore, sociolinguistics investigates of how people use language in their daily lives and as well as how it affects various aspects of society, including norm, culture and context about language used. It is supported by Wardhaugh (2006), Sociolinguistics investigates the relationship between language and culture in order to gain a better understanding of language structure and how it functions in communication. Because language is inextricably linked to society and related to each other. This means that sociology focuses on the differences in the way people speak in different social contexts, they are also fascinated in identifying the social functions of language, the type of language, and the methods used to express social factors to convey the triggered social meaning.

Social Background affects how people act, talk, behave, also how they think. When they have something in common on a group of people, they tend to have their similar characteristic that differentiate another group. It could be how they dressed, how they think also how they use their language. Language variations are included in the use of language within the community. As we have seen that language has many variations. Several factors can also affect the use of language in a country. It could be from geographical (region), race (specific region and gender), or neighborhood (class, age, gender, economic status, and education). One of the language variations that can be found in a daily conversation of society is slang. (Yule, 2006) stated that Slang is one of the non-standard language variations found all over the world. Slang is likely referring to explain phrases or words instead among teenagers and other groups of special interest use in place of everyday terms. Slang is mostly used by young people or people from the same social group who usually employs free-style composition words with distinct characteristics. This language variation is synonymous with spontaneous; there are no rules for developing slang. Sometimes people created slang spontaneously when there is a moment to describe of what kind of feeling that portray a particular moment. Teenagers tend to use in order to create a friendly atmosphere. There is not much pressure among teenagers to use slang. The fact that everyone uses it that the words just seem to come out of someone's mouth may take a while for the slang word to spread throughout the modern world, but it somehow finds its way into the mouths of most people. In general, the use of slang terms appears anywhere right now such as in song lyrics or movies. It is very fascinating to do research about Slang where it will provide a new knowledge about new words or sayings in English and the true meaning of the slang used in the movie.

Movie or as known as film, motion picture is work of moving images that enacts the story with the roles played by actors and actresses. Movies are cultural artifacts created by specific cultures. They demonstrate those cultures while also changing them. Movies are regarded as an important art form, a source of popular entertainment, and a powerful medium for providing knowledge or brainwashing people. A movie's visual foundation determines its overall state of communication. Based on the description above the author found many uses of slang in movie, *Lady Bird*. The author intends to analyze and study about the types and reasons of slang words used in the movie script, *Lady Bird*. The researcher only focused on the slang word and the dominant slang in *Lady Bird* based on Chapman's theory.

Therefore, the researcher formulated the research question as follows:

1. What are types of slang words that used in the movie *Lady Bird*?
2. What are the reasons of the slang word that used in the movie *Lady Bird*?

II. Review of Literature

2.1 Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics concerned society and language with information about the way language works, and how people build up social identity through language. Spolsky (2010) stated sociolinguistics is a branch study of the relationship between language and society, the use of language as well as the social structures in which speakers of a language live." Wardaugh (1998) states that Sociolinguistics is involved in the study of the relationship to study the relationship between language and society in order to better understanding the structure of language and the function of better comprehend language structure as well as the role of language for communication.

It is supported by Bayyurt (2013) stated that sociolinguistics can be explained as science which investigates the purposes and functions of language in society. The aim is to explain how language differs throughout geographical borders and how people from one context communicate with people in other contexts (for example, nonnative-nonnative speakers, nonnative-native speakers, and so on). It is therefore very closely related to the language variety which can often be distinguished from the aspect of the speaker to which the person belongs to a social group. There are some kinds of language variety such as jargon, style, register, slang, idiom. Thus, as we will study one of them, namely slang.

2.2 Slang

Slang language is one of the most used various languages that grew so that it spread among the public. Slang is the informal language that created by particular group to have its own meaning. Keraf (1980) stated Slang is an informal non-standard word that is used in conversation that placed in a typical, powerful, and humorous or ordinary word that is arbitrarily modified and used in conversation. Slang words are sometimes formed by accidental pronunciation or changes in ordinary words to create a new meaning.

Fromkin & Rodman (2003) stated that slang is a kind of informal language that developed as result as of the rapid expansion of new words and is used by people as a creative expression to say words more efficiently and easily. This means that slang words only used in particular situations and boundaries. Since slang is a colloquial language that used in an informal situation, Slang itself made spontaneously to describe certain situations or moment with policies within a group by those people with particular interests. There are many people use it because it is simple and communicative to talk with friends or society.

Flexer in Rachmijati, (2015) stated the use of slang can convey feelings and thoughts by an effective and effective method. The use of slang can also allow human being to communicate faster, easier, and more personally. Supported by Ober (2007) stated Slang is completely acceptable in everyday speech; it conveys specific information and shows indicate group membership. It means that the use of slang is not a problem because it expresses the community creativity to be point-of-difference.

a. Types of Slang

There is various theory in previous studies. Additionally, Chapman (1998) stated There are two types of slang, namely:

1. **Primary Slang** States that primary slang is the common slang that used by society natural to express their emotions in an informal way. Slang is always defined alternative idiom and is not required but selected especially in many young people conversations, common phrases usually used in everyday conversation. It can be concluded that Primary slang is a slang that commonly used in everyday life or it is an alternative way to reduce, change, or change the sound of a word.
2. **Secondary slang** tends to express something secret that only certain individuals who know the exact definition of the words itself. Some people or groups who use it in their social interactions commonly use, hear, and recognize it. Secondary slang sometimes occurs in a restricted area such as street gang, drug dealer, criminal. The words were chosen not to fix a group, but to express one's attitude and prowess by pretending for a while. But in the end, the use of slang is not constrained to the underworld, but is spreading throughout various public community. Love et al., (1988) stated Since most slang words themselves are metaphorical, the meaning of a given slang cannot be directly judged by its literary meaning.

b. Reason for using Slang

Slang word is a tool for people to be more creative in inventing a new word and create the assortments of languages. The usage of slang is effective to used in an informal situation to make it easier to say and trendy. Dooly (2006) stated that Because slang is generally used mostly by teenagers It's "cool", and by using it you indicate that the speaker is up to date with its times. This is a slang term commonly used by young people because it indicates that the speaker is up-to-date. Pardede and Kisno in Cong & Silitonga (2015) stated "can be put to use within a community who share ideas and viewpoint might use slang to distinguish themselves from others." It can be concluded that Slang used to differentiate their own identity in order to share ideas. All in all, most of people using slang word as an easy way to express themselves, and it is a very fun to maintain a conversation for the mutual understanding of two people talking. For that reason, the author intends to use theory based on Allan & Burridge (2006) stated that there are seven reasons of using slang words, namely;

1. To Address this type of reason surface when the speaker wants to preserve their close relationship with someone they already close with.
2. To Show Intimacy, the speaker tends to use non-standard vocabulary in order to show intimacy between speakers in conversation with people who have close relationship.
3. To Humiliate, the speaker tends to make fun or mock or to express dislike or unpleasant toward someone.
4. To Reveal Anger, occur when the character uses the slang word with the aim to symbolize anger toward someone
5. To Express Impression, the reason for this is showing impression or compliment towards something.
6. To Initiate Relax Conversations, Characters usually use slang words in the conversation for creating relax conversation especially when they have a close relationship.
7. To Form Intimate Atmosphere, which explains that character use the slang in purpose reducing social distant around stranger.

III. Research Method

Qualitative approach was applied in this study. The data that related to this research are collected from the movie script from the movie entitled *Lady Bird* by Greta Gerwig also from the other sources. Clissett (2008) stated that Qualitative research employs a broad of research methods to investigate human experience, perceptions, motivations, and behaviors. In this aspect, qualitative inquiry means the researcher must have a broad theory and understanding that related to the analysis in order to be able to get something meaningful.

This is a descriptive qualitative study. The descriptive method was used in this study. Hoepfl (1997) cites Strauss and Corbin (1990) stated that Descriptive qualitative research is a form of research which does not rely on quantitative or statistical methods. The researcher gathers data from the script. The data sample in this study is in the form of expressions spoken by the character. Third, the researchers gathered, sums up, interprets, and determine a conclusion from the process. In analyzing the data, the researcher employs Chapman's slang language theory to determine the type of slang. After the data were analyzed, the result of the research was described descriptively with the reason of it.

IV. Results and Discussion

The data in study are slang words that are found in movie script, Lady Bird which written and directed by Greta Gerwig. This point was analyzed by choosing the utterances in the movie script which is including the types of slang words and the reason the characters using slang word. The writer found considerable slang words occur in this movie and classifies the types of slang words, primary slang and secondary slang. Types and the explanation of the slang words will be presented in the following discussions.

No.	Types of Slang	Quantity
1.	Primary Slang	21
2.	Secondary Slang	4

From the table above, it shows that most types of slang used in the movie are primary slang, then secondary slang. The following describes each of the most common types of slang words. They are;

4.1 Primary Slang

Data 1

*Luis: Yeah, **gotta** go back to just felt tip markers. Crayola*
(00.07.38)

The preceding phrase contains a slang term, gotta. The above utterance was made by one of the characters when Luis responded to Marion while she was signing the paper. Gotta is slang because it is a contraction of got and to and is not used in a formal context. Gotta is derived from the word got, which means "must". The type of slang in the data is associated with primary slang since it is known by both native and non-native English speakers. Gotta is a slang term since used of informal language to express the one community and socially can be accepted to long tradition across generations, country and social classes. The reason of the slang word gotta used in the data is to initiate a relaxed and to make it personal conversation which is happen between coworkers.

Data 2

*Lady Bird: Um, actually, I was thinking - maybe we should go to the Deuce? (Trying to be casual) I was talking to Kyle about it and he was like "whatever it's **lame** but maybe I'll see you there."*
(00.41.05).

This utterance happened when Ladybird uses the word lame to quote Kyle's words when Lady Bird pretending to have a close relationship with Kyle with the aim to fooling Jenna. The word Lame is used is part of primary slang expression which is widely used by adolescents, youth groups. This occur since the word is commonly used in the late 80's to mention something that uncool which used until today. Lame also has some meaning as boring, something old- fashioned. In this movie, the expression lame used in dialogue between Lady Bird and Jenna. The word lame used by Lady Bird as a way of quoting Kyle's word when she was trying to manipulate Jenna. Since the relationship between Lady Bird and Kyle is not close enough. In this context the reason the character use word lame is to initiate relax conversation in order to have a smooth conversation so they feel closer as a friend.

Data 3

Shelly: You look like a **bad ass** girl in a band.

(1.08.38)

The participants in the dialogue are Shelly and Lady Bird. This utterance in this dialogue occurs when Lady Bird was about to go to the prom. The relationship between them is pretty close as they are friends. This slang identified as a primary slang since it was adopted from Black American Vernacular English and incorporated to mainstream American slang. The word bad ass is a contraction of bad and ass and is commonly used in colloquial language which has meaning very mean like cool, tough, confident. Bad ass is a compliment toward someone who is admired for their extreme behavior and attitudes. In this conversation, Shelly expressed her impression about Lady Bird's looks by using the slang word bad ass. The reason for slang word bad ass itself is showing impression or compliment that Shelly is impressed about the Lady Bird looks when she wanted to go to the prom.

4.2 Secondary Slang

Data 4

Jenna: (calling out) KYLE! Lady Bird and I just decorated the nun-mobile like "just married to Jesus!

Kyle: That's **hella** tight

(00.37.17)

This expression above happened when Kyle makes an impression on how Jenna and Lady Bird decorated Sarah-Joan's car with a text "just married to Jesus. . Hella is the slang that is grouped into secondary slang because linguists believe hella originated in the Hayward area and has been in use since the mid-1970s. Hella increased to popularity in the early 1990s, when it became a staple of the hip hop lexicon which it is used to express something in restricted way. It's a contraction of "hell of" and it is commonly used in place of "really" or "very" when describing something. The character uses the word hella in purpose decreasing distant when having conversation with people barely met. Since the expression occur when Kyle reacts to the Jenna's utterances about the car that Lady Bird decorated with Jenna. For the reason, this slang indicates reason to form intimate atmosphere.

Data 5

Kyle: Can I get your number? We were looking to set up some more **gigs** down there.

(00.42.54)

The expression above happened when Kyle invites Lady Bird to join his performance. This slang has meaning for a job that lasts within a certain period of time. Traditionally, the term gigs itself has been commonly used by musicians to define a performance engagement which usually referring to the music and entertainment industry. A musical, theatrical, or physical performance. Therefore, this categorized as a secondary slang which this expression often occurs to a particular community namely musicians. In this movie script, gig used by a bassist who wants to perform at some places. The slang gigs here is to built a relaxed and comfortable conversation for the purpose of making the conversation more intimate because they have met just a couple times. As a result, gigs is categorized as to form intimate atmosphere.

V. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be inferred that there are two types of slang namely, primary slang (84%) and secondary slang (16%). There were 25 data found in the movie *Lady Bird*. On the other hand, there are seven reasons of slang words discovered, To Address, To Form Intimate Atmosphere, To Initiate Relax Conversation, To Show Impression, To Show Intimacy, To Reveal Anger, and To Humiliate. Furthermore, it is possible to conclude that the type of primary slang is the most used slang that emerges frequently in *Lady Bird* context. People understand quite often the expression because they are commonly used therefore, they use expressions in everyday communication without any problem hearing expressions of the primary slang.

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