



The Function of Primary Slang Used as a Reflection of Friendship in Incoming Movie (2024)

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Abstract. *Slang as an informal language variety has an important role in forming and reflecting the social identity of a group. This study discusses the function of primary slang as a reflection of friendship in an American teen comedy movie entitled Incoming released in 2024. This study aims to identify the form of primary slangs used in the movie and analyze their functions in reflecting social relations between characters. The method used is descriptive qualitative with documentation techniques. Data are analyzed based on the context of conversations between characters in the movie with an emphasis on the social meaning in the use of primary slang based on the theory of Allan & Burridge (2006). Based on seven functions of slang, there are four functions identified in the analysis, consists of: to initiate relaxed conversation, to adress, to reveal anger, and to show intimacy. Among the four functions, to initiate relaxed conversation is the most dominant function that appears. This shows that slang is widely used to maintain relaxed, familiar, and humorous interactions between friendly characters. On the other hand, the functions to express impressions, to humiliate, and to form intimate atmosphere were not found in the analyzed data.*

Keywords: *Friendship; Function of slang; Primary slang*

Abstrak. Bahasa gaul sebagai ragam bahasa informal memiliki peran penting dalam membentuk dan mencerminkan identitas sosial suatu kelompok. Penelitian ini membahas fungsi bahasa gaul primer sebagai refleksi persahabatan dalam film komedi remaja Amerika berjudul Incoming yang dirilis pada tahun 2024. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi bentuk bahasa gaul primer yang digunakan dalam film tersebut dan menganalisis fungsinya dalam mencerminkan hubungan sosial antartokoh. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik dokumentasi. Data dianalisis berdasarkan konteks percakapan antartokoh dalam film dengan penekanan pada makna sosial dalam penggunaan bahasa gaul primer berdasarkan teori Allan & Burridge (2006). Berdasarkan tujuh fungsi bahasa gaul, terdapat empat fungsi yang diidentifikasi dalam analisis, yaitu: untuk memulai percakapan santai, untuk menyapa, untuk mengungkapkan kemarahan, dan untuk menunjukkan keintiman. Di antara keempat fungsi tersebut, untuk memulai percakapan santai merupakan fungsi yang paling dominan muncul. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa bahasa gaul banyak digunakan untuk menjaga interaksi yang santai, akrab, dan lucu antartokoh yang bersahabat. Di sisi lain, fungsi untuk mengungkapkan kesan, mempermalukan, dan membentuk suasana akrab tidak ditemukan dalam data yang dianalisis.

Kata kunci: Bahasa gaul primer; Fungsi bahasa gaul; Persahabatan

1. INTRODUCTION

Slang is one variants of an informal language. According to Wardhaugh (2006, p.83), in a multilingual society, many speakers can use many languages, meaning that each language has a different meaning and form from other languages, that is why language has many variations, one of which is slang. Chapman (2007, p.9), there are two types of slang: primary slang and secondary slang. The use of primary slang is something that comes naturally to members of a particular subculture, but it is a choice for all of us and something that is a choice rather than a necessity. Outside of the group, the use of primary slang is considered a choice

rather than a necessity. Secondary slang is used not to correct one's group, but to convey one's opinions and views by pretending to be a member of a street gang, a criminal, a gambler, or a drug user for a while.

Slang can be used in small group everyday communication today. It socially shapes and reflects a strong group identity and strengthens emotional ties between group members. A youth community is a social network or group consisting of adolescents aged 13 to 19 who share common interests, hobbies, or problems (Bahar et al., 2025, p. 187). This early slang can differentiate people and bring them closer to each other. In this case, slang can be an important tool to express this sense of bond in various situations.

Previous studies from Dewi (2020) have discussed the types, meaning, and the dominant types of slang words used in song lyrics but not the function and Purnamasari (2022) only discussed the types of slang in song lyrics without the function. Other studies by Siqui (2022) and Firdausi (2022) analyzed the presence of primary slang in movie and highlighted its role as an informal linguistic form that reflects how people interact on a daily basis. Although these studies have provided valuable insights, many of them have not specialized in the role of primary slang in expressing friendship, and a lack of related research has been pointed out.

Based on the above background, the problem generated as what functions are used to express the primary slang as a reflection of friendship? Therefore, the aim of this study is to analyze the functions of primary slang as a reflection of friendship among the characters. Through this analysis, the study intends to contribute to a deeper understanding of how friendship is reflected in real-life communication among youth.

2. THEORY

Primary slang is a type of informal language classified by Chapman (2007) that is a type of slang that occurs naturally in daily conversation and is widely used in a particular social group. Chapman classifies slang into two types: primary slang and secondary slang. To analyze the functions of primary slang, the theory of Allan and Burridge (2006) is applied. In this theory, the functions of slang are classified into seven: to address, to form intimate atmosphere, to initiate relaxed conversation, to express impression, to reveal anger, to humiliate and to show intimacy. This theory helps us understand how slang functions as a communication tool and as a reflection of social relationships between individuals.

Slang

Slang is an informal language originating from a community or subculture and may consist of words and phrases. It is also an informal language often used by a particular group in daily conversation to show identity, unity and familiarity among its members. Slang promotes creativity and innovation in language and is used to highlight the unique characteristics and attitudes of a group. Chapman (2007) divided slang into two such as:

a. Primary Slang

Primary slang is pure slang used by members of a subculture that naturally seems they would be mute without it. Of course they can't, because slang is defined as common expressions that people use in their daily communication, i.e. alternative expressions that are frequently used among teenagers and not necessarily required. These everyday expressions are often used in everyday conversations, for example in urban street gangs, and are prime examples of slang. For example:

Dude: to call a boy or a man

Babe: to call a girl or a woman that you like

b. Secondary Slang

Secondary slang is chosen not to correct a group, but to convey one's attitudes and common sense within small-scale guerilla theater, such as street gang members, criminals, gamblers, and drug users. This can convey contempt for someone or a sense of superiority. Slang is used to communicate something that only a select few people know. In this case, secondary slang is used by speakers who purposely choose slang related to their group to make an impression or convey a hidden message. For example:

Coke: cocaine

Pot: marijuana

Function Of Slang

According to Allan and Burridge (2006) there are seven function of slang, such as:

a. To Address

People often use slang to address familiarity. In personal relationships, people tend to prefer informal language as formal language can seem distant and stiff. For example, the slang word "dude" is often used to address a boy or a man.

b. To form intimate atmosphere

Speakers often use slang to facilitate conversations with strangers and minimize social barriers. In this sense, slang acts as a tool to build a more relaxed interaction, foster

familiarity, and reduce the initial awkwardness between strangers. For example, instead of saying "How are you?", saying "Hey man!" or "Yo!" can make you appear more casual and approachable in new social situations.

c. To initiate relax conversation

Often times, people choose to speak in a relaxed and informal way rather than using formal language. In informal situations, close people tend to use certain vocabulary to make the conversation more relaxed and less formal. For example, "lemme," an abbreviation of "let me," is often used in everyday conversation to convey a quicker and more intimate meaning.

d. To express impression

Speakers often use slang to clearly communicate their feelings about something they have experienced or seen, whether it be positive or negative. For example, the slang "No way!" is used to express surprise or disbelief at an unusual or unexpected event.

e. To reveal anger

There are many ways to express good and bad emotions, but one of the roles of slang is to express anger. Slang is used as a way to vent one's annoyance or disgust towards someone. For example, the slang word "jerk" is often used to insult someone, especially a man, who behaves in a rude, annoying, or disrespectful manner.

f. To humiliate

Slang is used to express displeasure and dislike, as well as to belittle others. In this case, the use of slang is different from that when expressing anger. For example, the slang word "loser" is used to mock someone who is considered to have failed or not succeeded at something.

g. To show intimacy

People tend to use non-standard words rather than formal words because slang is more effective at conveying familiarity in conversation. This word is more commonly used between people who have a close relationship than between people who have a long-distance or formal relationship. For example, the slang word "buddy" is used as an intimate greeting to a close friend.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative approach with the aim of understanding the meaning, context, and use of informal language in social interactions. Following Creswell (2009, p. 4), a qualitative approach is used to explore and understand the meaning that individuals or groups

give to social and humanitarian issues. This approach emphasizes the subjective interpretation and narrative process in a natural context. The data source for this study is the American teen comedy movie "Incoming", released in 2024 and available on the Netflix platform. Data collection was carried out by a documentation method. Data analysis was carried out using qualitative and descriptive methods. Each meaning of the data was taken from Urban Dictionary and the findings of the study were described in detail.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents an analysis of the data collected from the movie Incoming, focusing on the use of primary slang expressions that reflect the friendship between the characters. This analysis is based on the theoretical framework of slang functions, as introduced in the previous chapter. Each data is presented in the form of a dialogue excerpt containing a slang expression, followed by an explanation of the meaning, context, and specific functions of the slang based on its use in the interaction. This analysis aims to identify how slang is used to perform certain communicative functions and how these functions relate to the depiction of friendship in the movie.

[4-1]

Koosh: **Gang-gang**, y'all. Happy first day of school. The sun's shining, the birds are chirping, and your boy koosh has a breaking.

Kayvon: The fuck you just say? You are not koosh. That's my name!

The data found is **Gang-gang**. Denotatively, based on the meaning in Urban Dictionary, **gang-gang** is a form of slang derived from the word gang, which basically refers to a group of people, usually with strong ties, and often associated with street or criminal groups. However, in the use of "gang-gang", the denotative meaning refers more to greetings and showing a sense of togetherness. The use of the slang gang-gang in data [4-1] reflects the friendship functioned **to address**. In this context, Koosh uses the word "gang-gang" to greet his friends and emphasize his enthusiasm for the first day of school. This word helps to strengthen the relationship with his friends and show that they are part of a group or "gang" that supports each other. Although the word gang-gang comes from the word "gang," in the context of this conversation, this slang does not refer to a criminal group, but rather is used as a way to show intimacy and build connections between individuals.

[4-2]

Koosh: Look. I'm not stupid. I know I'm a **douche**. The only reason people tolerate me is because my parents are rich, and I throw sick parties.

Alyssa: Your brother does.

The slang used found is **douche**. A **douche** is someone who thinks they're cool or great, but in reality, they're not. Denotatively, the word "douche" means a cleaning tool that is usually used for medical purposes, especially in cleaning the feminine area. However, in the development of slang, this word has shifted its meaning and is used to describe someone who acts arrogantly, annoyingly, or is overly confident in a negative way. The use of the slang word **douche** in data [4-2] reflects the friendship in functioned **to address**. In this conversation, Koosh consciously refers to himself as a "douche" to express how others perceive him. **douche** literally means a cleaning tool, but in a slang context, the word is used as a social label to refer to someone who is annoying, arrogant, or disliked because of their attitude. The **to address** function is manifested in Koosh's use of the slang in a casual conversation with Alyssa to directly indicate his social identity.

[4-3]

Alyssa: What the fuck are you doing?

Benj: Nothing, I was **popping a zit!** Get out!

This data was found in the movie and contains the slang phrase **popping a zit**. The phrase **popping a zit** refers to the act of squeezing or collecting a pimple, often to release the pus or other substance inside. The use of the slang word "popping a zit" in data [4-3] reflects the friendship used **to initiate relaxed conversation**. In this conversation, Benji responds to Alyssa's question with a very casual and slightly uncomfortable phrase, "popping a zit," which is obviously not commonly used in formal social situations. However, since this exchange takes place between two characters who already know each other and are close, the use of this slang feels natural and also contains an element of humor. This shows that Benji feels comfortable enough with Alyssa to share personal information, even if it is physical or uncomfortable, without feeling embarrassed or awkward.

[4-4]

Eddie: Let it go, man. How's that fluffernutter?

Connor: **Bomb** as fuck

Eddie: Yeah don't tell me.

The slang used is **bomb** and it means to completely fail or destroy something important, such as an exam or presentation. Denotatively, the word **bomb** means an explosive or a device that can explode and cause damage. This meaning is literal and refers to a physical object without any figurative nuance. However, in the context of casual conversation, this word is used as slang to describe something that is very good, enjoyable, or satisfying, such as the

taste of food. The use of the slang word **bomb** in data [4-4] reflects the friendship in functioned **to initiate relaxed conversation**. In this conversation, Eddie and Connor use the word **bomb** to describe the quality or state of something being very good or great. In this context, **bomb** is used to describe a delicious or satisfying meal (fluffernutter) rather than a failed one. The use of **bomb** here serves as a relaxed and informal way of showing delight or satisfaction with something.

[4-5]

Connor: All right. Nice work. Let's **bounce**. What's the matter?

Eddie: This feels fucked up

The slang used in this movie is **bounce**. This slang usually means leaving one place to do something more exciting or interesting, or simply to move on to another place. Denotatively, the word **bounce** means to jump or bounce back, usually used to describe the physical movement of an object. This meaning is literal and does not contain any figurative elements. However, in the context of casual conversation, this word is used as slang to express the desire to leave or leave a place casually. The use of the slang word **bounce** in data [4-5] reflects the friendship in functioned **to initiate relaxed conversation**. In this context, Connor uses the word “**bounce**” to invite his friends to leave the place feeling relaxed and at ease. The slang is used in an informal tone and reflects the friendly relationship between the characters in an informal situation. Connor decides to use “let’s **bounce**” to casually express an invitation to go out. The use of this word indicates that the communication between them is relaxed and without formal pressure, creating a spontaneous and fluid atmosphere for teenage social interactions.

[4-6]

Benj: Ow! Don't you knock?

Alyssa: **What the fuck** are you doing?

This data was found in the movie and this is slang phrase, **what the fuck**. The phrase **what the fuck** an expression of extreme annoyance or frustration, usually after a recent chain of bad events has just been added to by something that just happened. The use of the slang **what the fuck** in data [4-6] reflects the friendship used **to reveal anger**. The phrase is said in a high-pitched voice after Alyssa discovers Benji entering her room without permission, i.e. without knocking, where she should not be. In this context, “**what the fuck**” is used to express anger and surprise at Benji's behavior. Even though they are friends, the use of this language indicates that Alyssa is annoyed and wants to show her displeasure directly.

[4-7]

Kayvon: Until then, I hear anyone call you koosh, **I'mma** throttle you.

Koosh: Okay, jeez

The slang used in this dialogue is **I'mma**, which is a shortened form of I am going to. **I'mma** is generally used to express one's intentions or plans, and is very common in informal conversations. The use of the slang word **I'mma** in data [4-7] reflects the friendship used **to show intimacy**. In this context, Kayvon uses **I'mma** (short for "I am going to") to express a threat to Kush in a casual, informal manner. The "I am" address indicates a closeness between them where Kayvon feels close enough to speak to him in a more casual, informal way. This use of slang indicates a closer relationship, where they can speak more freely without adhering to more formal conversational norms. This strengthens their bond as close friends and allows them to communicate using casual, familiar everyday language.

[4-8]

Benj: Ancient history. Once that bell rings, we're in high school. Know that means?

Eddie: New teachers? Pressure from our parents to succeed?

Connor: **Pubes**?

Benj: No, it means we have a fresh start. Anything is possible.

The slang that appears in this conversation is **pubes**. This slang **pubes** is a short form of pubic hair, which is hair that grows in the genital area when someone enters puberty. The use of the slang word **pubes** in data [4-8] reflects the friendship used **to initiate relaxed conversation**. In this context, Connor intentionally mentions something that is considered taboo or embarrassing (**pubes**) to soften the seriousness of the topic and create a more relaxed and humorous atmosphere among his friends. While Benji talks about his future and the pressures that come with entering high school, Connor makes an unrelated but funny comment. This shows that they feel comfortable communicating among themselves and are free to express their thoughts without fear of being judged.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings and discussion of this study, it can be concluded that the use of primary slang in the movie "Incoming" not only functions as an informal linguistic expression but also plays an important role in reflecting social relationships, especially the bond of friendship between the characters in the movie. According to Allan and Burridge's (2006) slang function theory, various slang expressions in the movie were found to have various linguistic and social functions. On the other hand, seven functions of slang, there are four functions identified in the data, consists of: to initiate relaxed conversation, to adress, to reveal anger, and to show intimacy. Among the four functions, to initiate relaxed conversation is the most

dominant function that appears. This shows that slang is widely used to maintain relaxed, familiar, and humorous interactions between friendly characters. Meanwhile, the functions to express impressions, to humiliate, and to form intimate atmosphere were not found in the analyzed data. The use of words such as gang-gang, douche, popping a zit, bomb, bounce, Emma, and pubes show how teenagers use slang in the movie as a means of building intimacy, reducing social distance, and communicating in a more casual and easy-going way.

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