ANALYSIS OF SLANG WORDS FORMATION FOUND IN THE LYRICS OF DRAKE’S SONGS

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Abstract

The development of music, film, and other industry of entertainment is stated to contribute to the existence of slang words. There are so many slang words that become popular after they are included in the lyrics of songs. One of them is YOLO (You Only Live Once) which is popularized by Drake. In relation to that, this descriptive qualitative research attempts to find out the types and word formation processes of slang words found in the lyrics of Drake’s songs. By taking the model of document analysis by Bowen (2009) and Qualitative data analysis by Miles and Hubberman (1994), it is found out that there are 190 slang words existing in the lyrics of Drake’s songs. They are respectively categorized into Clipping type (62 slangs), Fresh and Creative type (44 slangs), Compounding type (44 slangs), Imitative type (36 slangs), and Acronym type (4 slangs).

Keywords: slang, word formation, song lyrics
1. INTRODUCTION

Language, in terms of its use and progress, has currently undergone a rapid development. There exist so many new words which have never been heard or used before. Yet, there are as well some of the words which undergo meaning shift. Some of these words are mostly used in informal context or daily conversation. These types of words are what people usually call slang words.

Slangs or slang words are informal words, non-standard words or phrases which are commonly found in speech than in writing and are typically restricted to a particular context or group. According to Fromkin et al. (1974), slang is considered as the product of the development of the new words happening as a creative expression from people to make the words more efficient and simpler to be uttered. This phenomenon implies that slang words may vary from generation to generation and one geographical area to others due to the fact that slang words will always be updated along with the human development.

Furthermore, it is believed that the development of music, film, and other industry of entertainment contribute to the existence of slang words. Nowadays, slang can be found not only in daily conversation, but also in lyric of song, conversation on movie, on TV. It is quite difficult to explain the reason behind it. Yet, people believe that the use of slang words in their literary work, such as songs may attract more attention of the viewers. It is supported by the discovery stating that people love using slang word for its being efficient, simple and expressive. Thus, the use of slang has transformed into a mode.

Due to the rapid invention of slang words, there exist a phenomenon in which people do not know the history and the actual use of certain slang words. They are, instead, only able to use it without knowing the proper context of its usage. Patridge (1970) verifies that slang is easy enough to use but very hard to write about. This correlates with the phenomena in which most people use slang yet when they are asked to define slang, they would have a hard time in doing so.

Although, the existence of slang is never constant and always changing, the processes of forming slang words are the same as the processes of changing form and meaning of the formation of other words in the language. Linguistically, these processes are called word formation processes. Word Formation Processes are processes of creating new words and new uses of the old words or sometimes the invention of totally new words through the process.

One example of the famous slangs the formation of which can be tracked is the word “YOLO” which was popularized by Drake, an American rapper. The slang word “YOLO” is an acronym for “You Only Live Once”. Throughout Drake’s song entitled “The Motto” in his 2011 album, this slang word has become widely used by people, not limited to young ones, in all around the world. This shows that the development and the trend of slang words are enhanced when it is being included in song lyrics.

In relation to it, it becomes an interesting and worth matter to explore and investigate the slang words used as well as their word formation processes in song lyrics. There are several studies having been conducted to investigate slang words such as the investigation of slang words created and used in 1CAK.com site by Harared (2018), slang words used by Waria Slang Tulungagung by Nurhayati (2016), slang words found in novel “If You Know What Happened in MCI” by Mandala (2018), slang words found in movie “Step Up 2 The
Street” by Meinawati, Dewi, & Rachmawati (2019) and in the movie “Little Man” by Adi and Azmi (2018). The previous studies respectively investigated the word formation process using the theory proposed by Yule (2006) and Ridwan (2003), the function of the use of slang using the theory by Mattielo (2008), and the types of slangs using Holmes’ (1991) reference of social scales. In terms of the investigation of slang words found in song lyrics, there are two previous studies which are reviewed namely; “An Analysis of Slang Word in Song Lyrics Eminem on Album Kamikaze” conducted by Haspo & Rosa (2018) and “An Analysis of English Slang Words Used in Eminem’s Rap Music” done by Evadewi & Jufrizal (2018). The previous studies investigating slang words discovered in song lyrics mostly analyzed Eminem’s songs lyrics using the theory of word formation by Yule (2006) and the theory of characteristics of slang by Abadi (2009). However, there is not any study investigating in detail the words formation processes of slang words found in Drake’s songs despite Drake being the one who popularized the slang word of “YOLO”. Thus, this study attempted to investigate slang words found in lyrics of Drake’s songs using the theory of types of slang words from Allan and Burridge (2006) and the synthesized theory of word formation process offered by Yule (2010) and Mattielo (2008) and O’Grady, Aronoff, & Dobrovolsky (1997).

2. Research Method

This research is a descriptive qualitative research which was conducted by discussing, analyzing, and finding the slang word in the lyrics of Drake songs. The subject of this research was lyrics of songs sung by Drake namely; “God's Plan”, “Nice for What”, “I'm Upset”, “Don't Matter to Me”, “In My Feelings”, “Nonstop” and “Mob Ties” which are the ones from “Scorpion” album. Lyrics of Drake’s Songs that were analyzed in this research were in form of transcript of the song lyrics taken from online website: https://genius.com. The object of this research was the slang words found in the lyrics of Drake songs.

There were some steps in collecting the data on this study. First of all, the lyrics were observed through scanning reading technique. After reading it the researcher found the nonstandard English words in the lyrics. The researcher then marked the words and gave coding accordingly. After that, the researcher did note taking towards the data found. In order to help the researcher to classify the data, table was used as the instrument to classify the slang words found.

As for the data analysis, this research is using a model of document analysis by Bowen (2009) in which the song lyrics are treated as a document that will be interpreted to make a meaning. This study also uses Miles and Huberman (1994) qualitative data analysis that involve cyclic process of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The result from data collection will be analyzed using the theories of types of slang words by Allan and Burridge (2006) and slang words formation by Yule (2010), Mattielo (2008) and O'Grady, Aronoff, & Dobrovolsky (1997). The data analyzed will be then tabulated and displayed in form of table. To further show the word formation process of the data found, a description will be then provided.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data collection, it were found 190 data. The 190 data were categorized based on the theory of Allan and Burridge (2006) in order to define the types of slang words found in the lyrics of Drake’s songs. According to Allan and Burridge (2006), slang words can be categorized into 5 types namely; Fresh and Creative type, Compounding type, Imitative
The lyrics of Drake's songs are analyzed using this theory. The findings are as follows:

### Table 4.1
Tabulation of Types of Slang Words Found

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Slang Words</th>
<th>Number of Data</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fresh and Creative</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compounding</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitative</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clipping</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the findings, there are 62 slang words that are identified to be included into Clipping type. Clipping, according to Allan and Burridge (2006), is a variety of slang word that is formed by deleting some parts of words to create a shorter version of the words. The parts that are deleted may be located in the front, middle or the end of the words. The example is *Wishin* which is analyzed to be the clipped form of word *Wishing*. The deletion of letter *g* in the end is what makes it categorize into clipping type. It is found out that this pattern of clipping is the most dominant pattern that appears in the lyrics of Drake's songs.

The next type identified is Fresh and Creative type. It is found out that there are 44 slang words which are categorized into the Fresh and Creative type. According to Allan and Burridge (2006), slang words which belong to Fresh and Creative type are those which are totally invented words, informal variety, cleverness, imagination and up to date words. All slang words that belong to this type are not undergoing the process of imitating, clipping or else. The example of slang word that belongs to this type is *Broskies or brosky/broski* which is a slang word that is used to describe a brother or a male comrade or friend. Yet, it is stated that *broski* is only used to describe those who share the same ideals and have very close relationship with the speakers.

The third type identified is Compounding type with 44 data. Allan and Burridge (2006) defines compounding as the type of slang words in which the slang is made by combining two or more words. The meaning of the combination is not necessarily the combined denotative meaning of the words forming it. This type of slang words is based on the word formation process called compounding. The example is *Black card*, in the lyrics of Drake’s songs, which is not defined as a card that has black color. Yet, it is a word that refers to The American Express Centurion Card which is an invite only charge card.

The next type that arise in the lyrics of Drake’s songs is the Imitative type. According to Allan and Burridge (2006), a slang is stated to be Imitative type if it is imitating or derived from the standard English words. The imitated form may have the same or extremely
different meaning as the original words. Based on the findings, it is found out that there are 36 slang words that belong to this type. The example is the word *Cook* which is a word that in standard English is used to represent the act of processing food. However, in the context of slang and Drake’s songs, the word *cook* can be defined as the act of performing well.

The last type is Acronym which according to Allan and Burridge (2006) is a type of slang words that is constructed by the result of the combination of the initial letters of several words. Based on the findings, there are 4 slang words found in the lyrics of Drake’s songs that are categorized into this type. The example is *SMS* which is taken from the words Short Message Service. The initial letters of the words (S, M, and S) is taken and combined to form a new term of SMS. The term SMS is widely used since the invention of mobile phone.

The word formation process of 190 slang words or data identified were further analyzed using the synthesized theory from Yule (2010), Mattielo (2008) and O’Grady, Aronoff, & Dobrovolsky (1997). From 18 types of slang words formation process proposed, there were only 11 out of 18 types which were found. They are Coinage, Borrowing, Reduplicatives, Multiple Process, Reversed Forms, Variation, Compounding, Blending, Clipping, Acronym and Initialism, and Onomatopoeia. The details of the findings are as follows;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Slang Words</th>
<th>Number of Data</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coinage</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduplicatives</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Processes</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reversed Forms</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compounding</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blending</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clipping</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym and Initialism</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onomatopoeia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are 52 slang words (27%), based on the findings, that are indicated to undergo the clipping process. Clipping is defined as the word formation process that involve a deletion of one part of words to form a shorter one (Yule, 2010; Mattielo, 2008; O’Grady, Aronoff, & Dobrovolsky, 1997). The meaning possessed by the shortened form are the same as the original one. The example is word Ambidextrous which is in lyrics of Drake’s songs clipped into *Ambidex*.

Next is coinage. Based on the findings, it is found out that there are 48 slang words (25%) undergoing the coinage process. Yule (2010) defines coinage as the process of the creation of a totally new term. Mattielo (2008) further adds that coinage or word manufactures and fanciful formations is a process of forming a word through ex nihilo (out of nothing) without morphological motivation as in Kodak. It means that the new word may be coming from a term or name that is being adapted into English without changing its form. This is supported by O’Grady, Aronoff, & Dobrovolsky (1997) who state that coinage may be inspired by the name of things. Furthermore, it is also inferred that the words that are similar in terms of form with the standard English words but have different meaning can be categorized as
the coinage type. The example is *Shorty (n)*. This slang is a totally invented word which is commonly used by the rappers. According to urbandictionary.com, the word shorty has the meaning of an attractive woman.

The next type of word formation processes identified is multiple processes. There are 41 (22%) slang words undergoing the multiple processes. Yule (2010) states that a word may undergo more than one word formation processes. This more than one processes is called multiple processes. The example is *Tryna* which is analyzed to be undergoing several word formation processes, namely: Blending and variation. Thus, it is categorized into slang word that belongs to multiple processes type.

There are 35 slang words (18%), based on the findings, that belong to the category of slang words that undergo the compounding process. Compounding is defined as the process of forming a word by joining two or more words to produce a single form (Yule, 2010; Mattiello, 2008; O’Grady, Aronoff, & Dobrovolsky, 1997). The example is *Dar* *k days* which is in the lyrics of Drake’s songs not defined as days that are dark. Yet, it is defined as a bad occurrence that has happened.

In term of Reduplicatives process, it is found out that there are 3 slang words (2%) undergoing this process. According to Mattiello (2008), reduplicatives can be defined as the process of forming a word in which it is characterized by the existence of repeated constituents. Mattiello (2008) further adds that there are 4 main patterns of reduplicatives namely; ablaut, rhyming reduplicatives and rhyming compounds, and identical constituents. The example is *fifty-fifty* which is identified to undergo reduplicatives especially the identical constituents patterns. The meaning of the slang word is divide/split/share something.

Furthermore, it is inferred that there are 3 slang words (2%) that undergo the variation process. Mattiello (2008) explains that variation is a mechanism of forming a slang in which there are a process of modification of a word base by varying (part of) the spelling. The example is *Ya* which is the variation of *you*. The part “ou” in the word *You* is changed into “a” making it to form a new form of *Ya* which means *You*.

The next identified process is borrowing process with 2 data (1%). Yule (2010) defines borrowing as the process of word formation by taking over the words from other language. Yet, it is further elaborated that the borrowed terms are not limited from a language of society but also a language of a certain subject, like chemist, biology, economy. The example is the slang word *O3* which is analyzed to be originated from the chemist abbreviation of O3 which is an abbreviated form to represent the existence of 3 atoms of Oxygen in the Ozone.

Like borrowing, there are also 2 slang words (1%) that are identified to undergo the blending process. Blending is a process of forming a new word by combining two separate forms to produce a single new term (Yule, 2010; Mattiello, 2008; O’Grady, Aronoff, & Dobrovolsky, 1997). It is further stated that unlike compounding, blending is accomplished by taking only the beginning of a word and joining it to the end of other words. The example is the word *y’all* which is derived from the combination of word you and all. The process involves the elimination of “ou” in the word you.

The next process is acronym and initialism process with 2 data (1%). Acronym and initialism can be defined as the process of forming a new word by combining the initial letters of the words forming it (Yule, 2010; Mattiello, 2008; O’Grady, Aronoff, & Dobrovolsky, 1997). The example is *R.I.P.* in which the initial letters (R, I, and P) from the words Rest in Peace is
taken and combined to coin a new term of R.I.P.. The existence of point (.) in this case is indicating the process of acronym.

For the next processes identified are reversed forms and onomatopoeia with 1 datum for each process. Mattielo (2008) elaborates that reversed forms are slang words that can be read reversely. Meanwhile, Onomatopoeia, according to O’Grady, Aronoff, & Dobrovolsky (1997), is a process of word formation in which the word created is formed by imitating the sound of the thing that they name. The datum for each process is the reversed form of *dog* which is originally representing the word God. This is the similar case in the word evil which is the opposite form of live. This interpretation is supported by the fact that in the context of lyrics of Drake’s songs as shown below, the word dog is not referring to a literally dog.”Like I went blind, *dog*, you gotta hand it to me” (NONSTOP Verse2: Line 4). The slang word shush is the slang word that undergoes the onomatopoeia process. It is analyzed to imitate the sound that is produced when someone’s asking others to be quiet that is the sound of shhh.

4. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that there were 5 types of slang words found in the lyrics of Drake’s songs based on the Allan and Burridge (2006) theory. They are Fresh and Creative type, Compounding type, Imitative type, Acronym type, and Clipping type. From the total 190 slang words identified, there are 62 slang words which are included into the Clipping type, 44 slang words which belong to Fresh and Creative type, 44 slang words categorized as Compounding type, 36 slang words included into Imitative type, and 4 slang words categorized as Acronym type.

Furthermore, the word formation processes of the slang words identified in the lyrics of Drake’s songs were 11 out of 18 types of slang words formations based on the synthesized theory of Yule (2010) and Mattielo (2008) and O’Grady, Aronoff, & Dobrovolsky (1997). They are Coinage, Borrowing, Reduplicatives, Multiple Process, Reversed Forms, Variation, Compounding, Blending, Clipping, Acronym and Initialism, and Onomatopoeia. From the total 190 identified slang words found, there are 52 slang words which are formed through Clipping process, 48 slang words which undergo Coinage process, 41 slang words composed through Multiple Processes, 35 slang words composed through Compounding process, 3 slang words which are formed through Reduplicatives process, 3 slang words undergoing Variation process, 2 slang words undergoing Borrowing process, 2 slang words formed through Blending process, 2 slang words undergoing Acronym and Initialism process, 1 slang word formed through Reversed Forms process, and 1 slang word formed through Onomatopoeia process.
REFERENCES


