



## Type of Slang Found in American Gangster Move Directed by Ridley Scott

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### Abstract

The aim of study is to identify the types of Slang word used in the movie. The Qualitative method is used for this study. There were several steps taken in collecting the data such as: watching the movie, reading the movie script and understanding the words, phrases and dialogues by taking a noted of the data found, identifying and classifying the data based on the type of slang words found on the movie. The writer uses the theory from Eric Partridge (1945) on the book of "Slang To-Day and Yesterday". The study concludes that 15 slang words are found in the movie such as: shit, asshole, fuck, nuts, my man, cool, junkie, baby, bullshit, motherfucker, what the hell, bro, fellas, guys and dough. Based on the research results, the most widely used type of slang is society slang. This study suggests that educators and language learners should be aware of how slang changes over time and how it can be used in informal settings. By including the study of slang in language classes, students can better understand culture and communicate effectively

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## INTRODUCTION

Communication is considered as the primary function of human language. Language provides a platform to people in communicating and the interaction is a necessity for people themselves. Language is a tool which could determine someone's behavior or define someone's personality. In addition, as people are communicating, a social relationship could be established and maintained, which is a close related relation is shown between language and society in communication.

According to Victoria Fromkin (1996: 147), sociolinguistics is concerned with investigating the relationship between language and society with the goal of being a better understand of the structure of language and how language function in communication. There are various languages in society is found in studying language. Formal and informal language is different ways that people use which, each of the way is used in a different situation. Formal language is believed has function to be used in schools, mess media, or any other formal situations widely. Meanwhile, informal language is mostly used by teenagers or social group of people to show intimacy in the group or establish group identity.

Many kinds of languages are produced every day. One kind of language variety found in society is called Slang, which is as one of the ways to communicate with others in informal situation.

Most of people use slang on certain occasion which is slang is indicated as non-standard or informal language. According to Yule (2017:726), slang is more typically used among those who are outside established higher-status group. Slang, or “colloquial speech,” describes words or phrases that are used instead of more everyday terms among younger speakers and other groups with special interest.

Using slang in the conversation is not only to establish group identity but also could gain closed relationship and help them to develop the sense of solidarity. Nowadays, as slang is informal style of speech which is used in informal situation by a certain community, it is found easily in many forms of media such as song lyric, movie, and social media. Movie turns out to be so natural in life of people since the story itself sometimes is taken based on the problem of people’s real life. Therefore, movie becomes one of the most effective media that people use to know and learn about slang language which is used by the characters in the movie.

One of the most famous movies entitled “American Gangster” by Ridley Scott is chosen by the writer to analyze slang contains in a movie. It is definitely interesting to learn and analyze about slang words through this crime movie. It is because a true story as a gangster of black people’s life is taken into this movie and it is played well by some movie stars. Moreover, a significant number of slang words and phrase could be found in the conversation which is used by the characters. According to the above explanation, this is become the background of this study to choose a tittle Type of Slang Found in American Gangster Move Directed by Ridley Scott.

The first related study reviewed by Utami, N. W. L. N., Jendra, M. I. I., Sulatra, I. K. (2002) was entitled “The Analysis of Slang Language in Song Lyrics in the Bruno Mars “24k Magic Album””. The aim of the study was to find out the types of slang words that are used in song lyrics of Bruno Mars 24K Magic Album. The related theory used in the analysis was theory by Kipfer and Chapman (2007). The method which was used in the study was descriptive qualitative method and the technique that was used in this study was observation technique. There are four types of slang found as a result of the study such as; Primary Slang and Secondary Slang.

The second related study reviewed by Purnama, I. P. A. A., Suardhana, I. W., Sedeng, I. N. (2019) was entitled “Slang Used by Characters in the Script of the Film “I Hope They Serve Beer in Hell””. There are two research problems in his research, namely the type of slang and the context of the slang situation used in the film script "I Hope They Serve Beer in Hell (2009)". The theory of Allan and Burriddg (2006) was used to analyze the types of slang words; In addition, the theory of Holmes (2013) is used for the context of slang situations. Several dates collected in the study were analyzed using qualitative descriptive method. There are four types of slang found as a result of the study and four components are found for the context of the situation.

The third related study reviewed by Sulaiman, P., Syafitri, D. (2022) was entitled “Slang Word Analysis in the Ralph Breaks the Internet Movie”. Type of slang word that found in the movie is the research problem on the research. A related theory of slang from Allan and Burriddg (2006) was used to analyze the types of slang words found. The data of the study was analyzed by using

qualitative method. Four types of slang found as a result of the study in the *Ralph Breaks the Internet* movie. There are creative, imitative, flippant and clipping.

The aim of this study was to identify and analyze the types of slang used in the movie "American Gangster." By examining the linguistic features of this informal language, we can gain a deeper understanding of cultural nuances, social trends, and the evolution of language over time. This research contributes to the field of linguistics by providing valuable insights into the sociolinguistic aspects of slang and its role in shaping contemporary communication

## **METHOD**

This study was aimed to analyze type of slang in *American Gangster* movie by using a qualitative method. According to Creswell (2014) qualitative methods rely on text and image data, have unique steps in data analysis, and draw on diverse designs. Moreover, qualitative research can be used to examine and fully comprehend the meaning of individuals or groups in human social problems. Moreover, Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) states that qualitative research involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach: "This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in term of the meanings people bring to them."

The data on this research was taken from a movie entitled *American Gangster*. It is a 2007 American biographical crime movie which was directed and produce by Ridley Scott. The type of slang words used in the movie is the subject of the study. There were several steps taken in processing the data collection such as: watching the *American Gangster* movie repeatedly, reading the movie script and understanding the words, phrases and dialogues by taking a noted of the data, identifying the data and classifying based on the type of slang words found on the *American Gangster* movie.

In this research study, the data were analyzed by using a qualitative method. Moreover, in collecting the data, using a related method of slang is very important to determine the result of the study. By using the related theories of slang, the writer analyzed the slang words found in the movie by categorizing them into kinds of slang words. The theory of Eric Partridge (1945) on the book of "Slang To-Day and Yesterday" it is stated that there are numerous types of slang and this theory is used to analysis the type of slang found in the movie.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter showed the slang words found in *American Gangster* movie. According to the theory of Eric Partridge (1945), society slang is classified into the type of slang in the movie. It is described as following tabulated data:

Table 1. Type of slang word: Society Slang

| No | Slang Word    | Meaning   |
|----|---------------|---|
| 1  | Shit          | Dung  |
| 2  | Asshole       | The opening at the lower end of the large bowel: anus |
| 3  | Fuck          | To copulate (with) someone                            |
| 4  | Nuts          | Insane  |
| 5  | My Man        | My brother of buddy                                   |
| 6  | Cool          | Unruffled; relaxed                                    |
| 7  | Junkie        | Drug dealer   |
| 8  | Baby          | A lover; one's sweetheart                             |
| 9  | Bullshit      | Nonsense  |
| 10 | Motherfucker  | Interjection  |
| 11 | What the hell | Interrogative   |
| 12 | Bro           | Brother   |
| 13 | Fellas        | Friends   |
| 14 | Guys          | Male in plural  |
| 15 | Dough         | Money   |

### ***Society Slang***

The society jargon is disseminated like the technical language of the philosopher or the man of science, by the same means and with even greater rapidity. Most of the words soon disappear, but a considerable number of them make good their place in ordinary speech. Slang is concerned with the spirit of the universe, the world, life, and in that general usually subconscious preoccupation. Moreover, slang in society shows a joyously or jauntily over the object and the practices of the slangster's own calling. The words found on the movie are commonly used in daily conversation which rapidly and easily change follow the trend in the society, even though the words sometime have a rude meaning. It is categorized into this type of slang due to the nature of the words are closely related into the society. The meaning of slang words found is utilized on NTC's Dictionary of American Slang and Colloquial expressions 3rd Edition. Moreover, below are the explanations of slang words found by the researcher that can be categorized as society slang.

Data 1 : 03:08

Bumpy : Where's the pride of ownership, huh?

Where's the personal service?

You see what I mean? Shit.

I mean, what right do they have of cutting out the suppliers,

Pushing out all the middlemen, buying direct from the manufacturer? Sony this, Toshiba that.

This slang word shit means dung. On the above conversation, the word shit is said by Bumpy who is the boss of the gangster to his bodyguard named Frank. The slang word is used by him to show the things belong to a certain group.

Data 2 : 08:10

Richie : You bit me, asshole!

Alfonso : I swear to God, Richie. I didn't know it was you.  
I'd never slam a door on your hand, knowingly.

Richie : You bit my fucking hand.

The slang word asshole means the opening at the lower end of the large bowel; the anus. On the above conversation, the word is said by Richie when his hand is bitten by Alfonso when he tried to come in to Alfonso's room. The slang word said by Richie is to express or show his anger or annoyed.

Data 3 : 10:32

Freddie: What's the rush, Richie?  
Half an hour, the warrant'll be here.

Richie : I got night school.

Freddie: Guess you're gonna miss it.

Richie : Fuck this. Come on!

Freddie: You sure?

The slang word fuck which is quoted on the above conversation means to copulate (with) someone. The above conversation occurs between detective Richie in the car with Freddie. The slang word is said by Richie in to express his impatience in waiting.

Data 4 : 13:16

Toback: How much is it?

Richie : \$987,000.

Toback: Well, what happened to the rest of it? What the hell are you doing counting it out here in front of everybody?

Are you nuts? Get it back in the bags

The word nuts on the above conversation means insane. This slang word is said by Toback to express his anger becausee of counting money in front of the cops in the police office.

Data 5: 19:34

Tango : Look, don't sell dope then, Frank. Get a real job.

You need a fucking job, Frank? Hmm? Is that what you need?

Well, you can come work for me. Okay?

You can drive me around, huh? You can open my doors.

Huh? "Yes, sir", "No, sir", "Right away, sir",

"Anything you want, Massa Johnson".

Frank : Twenty percent. Twenty percent is my profit, Tango.

If I give you that, then what do I got left? Nothing, man.

Twenty percent puts me out of business, and every somebody  
you know out of business.

There's legitimate ways of doing things, Tango, and then there's this way. Not even Bumpy  
took 20%.

Tango : Bumpy's fucking dead.

Frank : My man.

The word my man on the above conversation means my brother which commonly  
used in daily conversation. This word is said by Frank when Tango asking to stop selling drugs. He  
uses the word my man to show his friendliness due to Frank is his friend.

Data 6 : 32:31

Group of people : Why you goin' thru, motherfucker?

Richie : Be cool! Be cool, all right?

I'll find out what's going on in here.

Freddie : Richie.

The slang word cool means unruffled or relaxed. The word is said by Richie to a hundred of  
people in front of apartment at Tower 2, Floor 1G when he tried to come in to the room to see  
someone died that was informed by Freddie. The slang word cool is used to make those people feel  
unruffled while Richie tried to come to the room to check what is happen.

Data 7 : 01:15:37

Dominic : I don't think it is.

Frank : You don't?

Dominic : I don't. I know your customers are happy, Frank. Bunch of fuckin junkies  
that they are.

The slang word junkies mean drug dealer. The above conversation occurs between Dominic and Frank, they are still on the table after having a lunch. The slang word junkie is used by Dominic to show or express that the guy belongs to a certain group of drug dealer.

Data 8 : 01:23:26

Frank : Now come here, baby.  
Eva : What's happening?  
Frank : Sit tight.  
Trupo : Congratulations, Frank.

The slang word baby means a lover or one's sweetheart. The above conversation occurs in the car between Frank and his wife after their wedding celebration and before they stopped on the way by detective Trupo. The slang word baby is used by Frank to show or express love to his wife who is a person that he loves or person that he has a romantic relationship with.

Data 9 : 01:33:07

Frank : See, brand name, brand name means something, you understand?  
Nicky : Shut the fuck up!  
Go ahead. Sorry about that bullshit.

The word bullshit on the above conversation between Frank and Nicky in a bar means nonsense which is said by Nicky. He used the word to express his annoyed due to their conversation was disturbed by the noise.

Data 10 : 01:34:02

Nicky : I'll call it Red Magic. Even if it don't sound as good.  
Frank : Name it what you want.  
Put a choker on it, motherfucker, and call it Blue Dogshit,

The word motherfucker that is said by Frank on the above conversation in a bar means Interjection. He used the word to express his anger toward Nicky during their discussion about name of the drugs.

Data 11 : 01:34:47

Lucas : Fuck, is that cops there?  
Frank : It's all right.  
What the hell they gonna do, give us a ticket?  
Lucas : Stuff's in the car, Frank.

The word what the hell on the above conversation is said by Frank in the car means interrogative. He used the word slang to express his anger due to on their way, they were stopped by cops and the stuff's (dope) were on the car.

Data 12 : 01:35:46

Trupo : I got a better idea. `

Or would you rather me throw you and your bro in the river?

Frank : Or would you rather your house blows up next time?

The slang word bro used on the above conversation between Trupo and Frank means brother. This slang word is used by Trupo refers to Frank's brother when the stuff's (dope) were found in the car.

Data 13 : 01:43:38

Trupo : The fuck is this guy doing?

Doc : Hey!

Champagne.

Doc : Merry Christmas, Detectives.

Trupo : For us?

Doc : Yeah. Enjoy that.

Trupo : You fellas have a good time.

The conversation is on Trupo's car parking and the slang word fellas mean a fellow. The slang word is said by Trupo to show or express his pleasure as Frank keeps the promise.

Data 14 : 02:09:02

Richie : All right, they're cutting and bagging in the South Tower of the Stephen Crane Projects right now.

Toback : Are you sure this is it?

You're positive?

Richie : I'm positive, Lou: I'm positive: Okay?

Everything is ready to go

All the guys are ready to go

Just push the button, give me the warrant, okay?

Okay. You got it.



The slang word *guys* means *fellow*. The above conversation occurs on the phone when Richie gives instruction to his partner, Toback. The word *guys* is used by Richie to show or express that belongs to a certain group of police.

Data 15: 02:19:21

Frank : I was talking to my lawyers, they said something I can't believe.

Did you really find a million \$ in the trunk of a car and then turn it in?

Richie : Yeah.

Frank : You did that for real, huh? My man! Good for you.

Shit...

Frank : You know johnny law got the dough, right?

Richie : Maybe.

Frank : Ain't no "maybe", Mr. Richie.

The slang word *dough* means *money*. The above conversation occurs in a room between Frank and Richie. They discuss about lots of money that was found the trunk of a car and the slang word *dough* is said by Frank. The word is addressed or belongs to a million of dollars.

The findings of this study align with previous research on slang in popular culture. Utami et al. (2022) identified primary and secondary slang in Bruno Mars' "24K Magic" album. Purnama et al. (2019) categorized slang in the film "I Hope They Serve Beer in Hell" based on Allan and Burrige's framework. Sulaiman and Syafitri (2022) investigated creative, imitative, flippant, and clipping types of slang in "Ralph Breaks the Internet." While these studies differ in their specific focus, they all highlight the prevalence of slang in contemporary language use. The current study further contributes to this body of research by examining slang in the context of the movie "American Gangster" and demonstrating the dominance of society slang in this particular work.

The findings of this study have significant pedagogical implications. Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) should be aware of the prevalence of slang in popular culture and the potential impact it can have on language learning. By incorporating slang into their lessons, teachers can help students develop a deeper understanding of cultural nuances and improve their communicative competence. However, it is important to use slang judiciously and to provide appropriate context to avoid misunderstandings. Additionally, teachers should emphasize the importance of standard English and the appropriate use of formal and informal language in different situations. By adopting a balanced approach, educators can empower students to navigate the complexities of contemporary language use.

## CONCLUSION

After analyzing the data on this study, 15 slang words found in American Gangster movie. The words were shit, asshole, fuck, nuts, my man, cool, junkie, baby, bullshit, motherfucker, what the hell, bro, fellas, guys and dough. The theory from Eric Partridge (1945) on the book of "Slang To-Day and Yesterday" was used to analyze the data on this study. It is stated that there are numerous type of slang and the most widely used type of slang is society slang. The words found on the movie are commonly used in daily conversation which rapidly and easily change follow the trend in the society.

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