

The Use of Sundanese Slang by Teenagers in an Internet-Based Chat Application

Gifta Annisa Auni
English Language and Literature
Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia
gifta.auni@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The research aims to investigate the types of Sundanese slang used by teenagers on a social media LINE and the social factors influencing the use of slang. This research applies a descriptive qualitative research method. The participants of this research were 28 students of a senior high school in Bandung, whose ages are in the middle of 16-18. The data were collected through conversations on social media LINE. To analyze the data, the theory proposed by Allan and Burrige (2006) and other theory of slang types were implemented to identify the types of Sundanese slang. To examine possible factors which influence the use of Sundanese slang by the teenagers, this study uses Holmes (2003) social factors and social dimensions of language use. The findings reveal that the participants express slang on social media LINE. Those slang words are categorized into five types. However, the Sundanese slang found in this research only matched with the two types: imitative type and clipping type. In addition there are two other types of slang found in the research outside the categories proposed by Allan and Burrige (2006), namely loan or borrowing and back slang. The most widely used type of slang is clipping type with 57 %, followed by imitative type with 20%, loan/borrowing type with 20%, and back slang with 3%. The teenagers tend to use the clipping type because they want to write as fast as possible, in order to save a bit of their time. Furthermore, the findings show that there are three social factors influencing the use of slang by the teenagers, namely participants, settings, and topics. This study confirms Zhou (2013), Pedersen (2009), Reyes (2005), and Tannen (1996) who state that male tends to use more slang rather than the female. The present research is also in line with Richter (2006) and Reyes (2005) who claim that the use of slang is influenced by the topics. However, this study contradicts Warsa (2013) who asserts that Sundanese slang is not influenced by other languages and there is almost no clipping on it. Whereas, the results of the present research show that the Sundanese slang used by the youth is influenced by Indonesian and English, and the most frequent slang used by the youth is the clipping type.

Key words: Slang, Sundanese slang, social media, slang types, and social factors.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a multilingual speech community, which has Indonesian language as their standard language and many regional languages as their vernacular language. According to Sensus (2010), Indonesia has 1158 vernacular languages. However, this number of languages is apparently decreasing due to the non-existence of the speakers of particular vernacular languages in Indonesia. This phenomenon may lead to what is called a language endangerment, a situation where a language is heading towards extinction, which happens when its speakers stop using it. In order to survive, endangered languages need a meaningful role in the host society, preferably on all three levels of community, nation and the international setting.

One of the most known vernacular languages in Indonesia that is possibly experiencing this phenomenon is Sundanese language, a language that is used in the West Java area. Recently, the Sundanese people, especially the teenagers, show a negative attitude towards Sundanese language

(Indrayani, 2011). The language that Sundanese people use today begins to change; they do not simply speak in their ethnic language for many of them also speak in Indonesian as their national language. To an extent, they even communicate in English as their foreign language. Although the government already issued a regulation about how Sundanese people should use, maintain, and develop Sundanese language (as stated in PERDA Kota Bandung, 2012), this endangerment phenomenon is actually still happening.

One of the reasons why the Sundanese keep their negative attitude is perhaps because there is an assumption that if people use Indonesian in their daily activities, others will consider them as a member of the higher group of a society. As a matter of fact, as Labov (1998) argues, vernacular language is the variety one learns first, many speakers stay monodialectal in it all their lives even though it is typically of low prestige.

Other than the speakers' negative attitude, another recent

factor that may influence language endangerment is the Internet. Crystal (2001) states that there is already a widespread popular myth that the Internet is going to be bad for the future of language that technospeak will rule, standards be lost, and creativity diminished as globalization imposes sameness. Language that the teenagers use online tends to contain significantly more slang than written language in other contexts (Coleman, 2012).

Slang is included in non-standard language as the sort of words and expressions which anyone might use in conversation or a letter, but which is not used in a speech or formal essay. Slang in itself is not something brand new. Nevertheless, some features of the language used in instant messaging conversations are completely new. The language online, which Crystal (2001) calls 'netspeak', contains a new kind of initialism, which is the general term for acronyms, abbreviations, and multi-word phrases that are compressed into a single word. Slang changes rapidly, and this change is

mostly caused by teenagers and young adults.

The Internet, in this case, seems to have become an opiate for Indonesian people, especially among adolescents. APJII (2016) states that the Indonesian teenagers frequently use the social media on the Internet for almost 24 hours. The use of slang on social media by the Sundanese teenagers in every day life may become a factor which can either hasten or hamper the language endangerment of Sundanese language.

Therefore, the focus of this research is on investigating the Sundanese slang which is used by teenagers in Bandung; a big city in Indonesia, especially in the context of internet-based communication applications. I have built this research on two different theoretical frameworks. The first theory is based on Allan and Burridge (2006) about types of slang. Another framework which is used to strengthen the present research is the theory of Holmes (2013) regarding the factors that influence the teenagers to use the slang language. Hence, these are the

research questions that guided my study:

1. What types of Sundanese slang do the teenagers use to communicate on “LINE” application?
2. What are the possible factors that influence the way teenagers use Sundanese slang language on “LINE” application the most?

The purposes of this research is to investigate the types of Sundanese slang used by teenagers on a social media LINE and the social factors influencing the use of slang. This research is significant theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research is expected to provide a clear explanation about types and factors of slang Sundanese which are used on an Internet-based chat application by Sundanese high school students in Bandung. Practically, this research is important to be carried out because the result of this study can enrich the literature of slang language especially the Sundanese slang for students of sociolinguistics courses

and become reference for further research.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Allan and Burrige (2006) slang is often considered as informal and deemed inferior to the standard speech. As speech styles, slang are all used to signal informality. Partridge (1947, as cited in Mattiello, 2005) acknowledges that there are five decades of slang history and each of them has different characteristic. It started from sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth century.

Slang is a variety of language that can be found in almost every language, including Sundanese. Warsa (2013) acknowledges that Sundanese slang is an informal language that often changes. The Sundanese people define slang as "prokem" or "okem". He further states that Sundanese slang was originally carried by gangs or certain groups, used as a secret language which was only known to the group. However, there are some slang languages which are more popular

and used by more than one group. Recently, there are many Sundanese slang used by Sundanese people. The current Sundanese slang used by Sundanese people are words which derive purely from Sundanese language. However, this Sundanese slang might continue to grow and change throughout times.

According to Allan and Burridge (2006), slang is divided into five types; (1.) Fresh and creative which is defined as slang word which has totally new vocabulary, cleverness, and imagination, in order to describe something in informal situation; (2.) Flippant which means that slang language made by two words or more in which the words composed not correlated with the denotative meaning, and often used in informal settings; (3.) Imitative which means that slang word imitating or derived from the Standard English (SE) word; using Standard English words in different meaning or combining two different words; (4.) Acronym or abbreviation which is type of slang constructed by the result of words from the first letters of each word in a phrase or

this type is made by the initials from a group of words or syllables, which is often used in informal settings; and (5.) Clipping type which is one of variety of slang made by deleting of some parts of longer word become a shorter form in the same meaning.

There are many factors that influence language use, such as slang. One of them is social factor which is the focus of the study. Social factor according to Holmes (2013) consists of settings, participants, topics and functions. The following are the definitions and examples of the social factors proposed by Holmes (2013): (1) Settings: time and place, and that of situation (Holmes, 2013). Thus, situations include a family breakfast, a faculty meeting, a party, Thanksgiving dinner, a lecture, a date. Social situations may be restricted by cultural norms which specify the appropriate participants, the physical setting, the topics, the functions of discourse, and the style (Barker & Wright, 1954, in Tripp 2004); (2) Participants: who is talking to whom (Holmes, 2013). Linguists will make distinctions

within these categories. For example, the audience can be distinguished as addressees and other hearers (Hymes, 1974); (3) Topic: the manifest content or referent of speech (Holmes, 2013). Topically equivalent sentences may be different in form so that topic is maintained through a paraphrase or translation (Tripp, 2004). Topic includes both gross categories such as subject matter (economics, household affairs, gossip), and the propositional content of utterances; and (4) Function: the aim or purpose of the conversation (Holmes, 2013). Skinner (1957) has pointed out that in its social uses language may be viewed as operant (rewarded or punished) behavior, which affects the speaker through the mediation of a hearer.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design of this research is descriptive qualitative. This design is particularly chosen because this study aims to examine the qualitative aspects of slang, namely its types and factors triggering the use of slang, which are considered to be one of

sociolinguistic phenomena. The data are unscripted conversations, which is in accordance with Creswell (2009) that there are two characteristics in conducting qualitative research. The first characteristic is that the data has to be taken from a natural setting, and then the second one is that the data collection is in the form of files or transcription of dialogues. However, the nature of this study is not purely explain the data verbally because there is a slight calculation of the frequency of slang occurrence; nevertheless, the calculations is not reach the quantitative design.

This research used data that were taken from some conversations in an Internet-based chat group that consist of 41 students of senior high school. Specifically, the member of the group consists of 15 female students and 26 male students, whose ages are in the middle of 16-18. The population of this study is 41 high school students who are a member of one social media group. Nevertheless, not all 41 students are active to communicate on the group. There are only 28 high school

students whose seen to be active from other teenagers. The 28 teenagers consist of 20 male students, and 8 female students. Thus, the 28 students who are active in the social media are used as the sample of this study. The conversations were taken from one Internet-based chat application called LINE.

The data were collected from only one main source because, as far as the study is concerned, there appears to be a tendency that the younger generation favors a particular application. It turns out the teenagers in Indonesia tend to communicate more in the application LINE. The data of the study were analyzed based on two theories. The first is the theory by Allan and Burrige (2006) about the types of slang. To examine possible factors which influence the use of Sundanese slang by the teenagers, this study uses Holmes (2003) social factors and social dimensions of language use.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

There are 30 Sundanese slang words found in the research. The Sundanese

slang words here are identified based on the use of informal words that are not recorded in the Sundanese dictionary. The 30 slang words, in this case, are classified into five types according to Allan and Burrige (2006) and two other types according to Potter (1975) and Kahn and Ilson (1985) .

The research finds that the most frequent slang type that is used among the adolescents is clipping, with the frequency of 17 words. This type is respectively followed by imitative slang, with 6 words, loan/borrowing, with 6 words, and back slang with one word. However, as far as the study goes, fresh and creative, flippant, and acronym slang types are not found. Thus, from these results, it can be stated that the slang word that is most frequently used on the Internet based chat application is clipping. The following sections will explain the Sundanese slang types in details, with regards to the types proposed by Allan and Burrige (2006).

1.Clipping

Clipping is the slang type with the highest number of use

among the teenagers. There are 17 words of clipping slang found in the research; *ajig*, *baraha*, *daks*, *eweh*, *gblg*, *ges*, *gs*, *kntl*, *mbung*, *mnh*, *ngke*, *njing*, *urg*, *urng*, *yu*, *heeh*, and *enteu*.

Clipping is a variety of slang formed by deleting some parts of a longer word, so it becomes a shorter form but in the same meaning. Potter (1975, as cited in Salma, 2013) says that there are two types of shortening, namely *aphesis* and *apocope*. *Aphesis* is creating new words by deleting consonant or vowel at the first syllable, while *apocope* is creating new words by deleting consonant or vowel at the last syllable.

In this research, the teenagers use both types of shortening slang. The example of *aphesis* can be found in the words; *baraha*, *daks*, *mbung*, *ngke*, and *njing*. Those words are made by deleting vowels and consonants at the first syllable. Meanwhile, other words that can be seen in Table 4.4 are those that exemplify *apocope*; words which created by deleting consonant vowel at the last syllable.

2. Imitative

Based on the results of the observation on teenagers' conversation on social media "LINE", there are six words from the conversations that can be categorized as imitative slang. Here are the examples of imitative slang words found in the data.

The examples are those that in line with the theory proposed by Allan and Burridge (2006), who argue that imitative slang means that the word is imitated or derived from the Standard English (SE) word. Using Standard English words in different meaning or combining two different words. In the case of Sundanese slang, imitative slang is made by imitating the Standard Sundanese words, and it is used in different meaning.

The six Sundanese imitative slang are "waduk", "mabal", "sarap", "gambling", "pang", and "kalem". Those six Sundanese imitative slang, in this case, are derived from Sundanese standard words. as can be seen in the following table:

Table 4.1 Imitative Slang

No.	Slang Words	Original Words	Slang Meaning	Dictionary Meaning
1.	Waduk	Waduk	You are lying	Animal waste
2.	Mabal	Mabal	Skipping class at school	Taking an impassable path
3.	Sarap	Sarap	Crazy	Nerves
4.	Maen	Maen	To play something, such as games and sports	Gambling
5.	Pang	Pang	Please	The most
6.	Kalem	Kalem	Be chill	Sink

3. The other types of Slang

There are seven other Sundanese slang words found in the research.

However, the characteristics of the seven slang words are not in accordance with the characteristics of Allan and Burridge (2006), but can fulfill the characteristics of other theories. The other types of slang words found in the research are loan or borrowing (Kahn and Illson, 1985), and back slang (Potter, 1975).

3.1 Loan/Borrowing Slang

There were six borrowing slang found which were made from other foreign language. Following is the table of loan/borrowing slang found in the research:

Table 4.2 Loan/Borrowing Slang

No.	Slang	Slang Meaning	Original Words
1.	Gretongan	Free stuff	From Indonesian Gratisan
2.	Sleding	Sliding in the field	From English Sliding
3.	Sekul	School	From English School
4.	Anju	Swear	From

		word for dog	Indonesi an Anjing
5.	Pakong	Swear word for pig	From Sundane se Bagong
6.	Koplok	Swear word for f*ck	From Indonesi an Goblog

The results above show the types of slang that are borrowed from Indonesian and English. It is in line with Kahn and Illson (1985) who argues that loan or borrowing word is the process of taking over words from othe dialects or other foreign languages.

From the findings above it can be seen that the teenagers borrow some words from another language to express things. The word “gretongan” is derived from Indonesian language which is “gratisan”, the word were used to express that the person is want something for free. Meanwile the word “sleding” is taken from English which is “sliding”, the word is usually used in soccer terms which

means to seize the ball from the opponent by tackling the leg and sliding in the field. Another word that is found is “sekol” which taken from English that means “school”. Indonesian language and English were found in the data because the two languages are languages that are used everyday by the teenagers.

3.2 Back Slang

According to the results of the observation on teenagers’ conversation, one word of back slang were discovered. The example is in line with the theory proposed by Potter (1975), which argues that back slang is a process of revising the order of the word, such as, *bone* becomes *enob*, *game* becomes *emag*, and *market* becomes *tekram*. The conversations reveal one back slang word which is “upit” that is taken from Indonesian “tipu” which means *lie*.

Factors Triggering Slang

1. Settings

Setting refers to the social context of the interaction (Holmes, 2013). The setting of the data conversation is an Internet-based chat application or a social media called “LINE”. LINE is

a free communication app which allows the users to make free voice calls and send free messages whenever and wherever they are. There are two ways of communication that can be used by the users, namely personal chat and multi-personal chat. In personal chat, the communication is only between two persons, meanwhile, in multi-personal chat the participants is more than two persons. Other setting of the data conversation is on a multi-personal chat, which is a chat room that consisted of 41 students.

Based on the results the most frequent slang type that appears among the adolescents is clipping with 17 words, followed by other types of slang with 7 words, and imitative with 6 words. Thus, it can be said that the most frequent slang word that appears in the Internet based chat application setting is clipping. Clipping type is more often used because when communicating with friends in text messages or chat rooms, the words that people used tend to be shortened in order to save some effort.

2. Participants

Participants of the data conversation here are 28 students of a senior high school, which consist of 8 female students and 20 male students, whose ages are in the middle of 16-18. The frequency of how often the male and female use the slang is apparently different. Based on the findings, it can be seen that male teenagers tend to use more slangs with the total number of 33 words while female teenagers only use 2 words. From the analysis, it can be seen that male teenagers are evidently more aware of the use of slang. Despite that, it can be seen that both male and female teenagers have the tendency to use a particular slang type on social media "LINE", which is clipping (Male 52% and Female 50%). Differences in the use of slang can also be seen from the interlocuters.

From the findings, it can be said that male teenagers tend to be more superior, in terms of numbers, to females in the use of each types of slang. This happens because most females in this group prefer to communicate using casual Indonesian language. They use this

casual language to both male and female interlocutors. From the result, it can also be said that gender somehow influences the use of slang by male and female teenagers.

3. Topics

Another factor that influences the use of Sundanese slang is the topic of the conversation. Topic refers to what is being talked in the conversation (Holmes, 2013). is the kind of speech act or event (Hymes, 1974). Salma (2013) states that the topic discussed can affect the level of formality. In the research there are 7 different topics found: gaming, telling about assignment and test, telling school information, expressing deep condolences, swearing and mocking, asking for help, and cheering a friend. The 7 different topics are categorized again into three main topics, which are academic topic, leisure topic, and miscellaneous topic.

From the explanations based on the topics listed above, it can be concluded that the Sundanese slang appeared more on two different topics: gaming (leisure) and swearing (miscellaneous). Slang is widely used

on both topics, because the topic of gaming and swearing is the example of most informal topic among the other topics. In addition, the miscellaneous topic contain more slang because the adolescents usually use the slang words during the reaction and interruption. The slang also appear more when the tone of the conversation is less-serious. The results is in accordance with the theory of Allan and Burrige (2006) which states that slang is a language of a highly colloquial and contemporary type, and often considered as informal.

Discussion

After analyzing the types of Sundanese slang, it can be concluded that there are 30 Sundanese slang words found in the teenagers' conversations on the social media "LINE". In the analysis of the slang types, the Sundanese slang words are matched to two types out of five classifications of slang types by Allan and Burrige (2006). In addition, there are some Sundanese slang words which are matched to other characteristics of slang, namely loan/borrowing slang (Kahn & Ilson,

1985) and back slang (Potter, 1975). The most frequent slang type which identified from the conversations is clipping which occurred 17 times or about 57%. However, the types that have the least frequency of occurrence are fresh and creative, acronym, and flippant which do not appear at all or 0%.

The reason why the youth tend to clipped their words is to save a bit of time and effort. This findings is in accordance with Nielsen (1997) who states that people on the Internet are rarely read word by word; instead, picking out individual words and sentences. Nonetheless, there were three types of slang which was not used by the teenagers, namely fresh and creative, flippant, and acronym. The three types were on the lowest percentage because flippant is the type of slang which contains more than two words; meanwhile, the teenagers tend to write the short version of a word. Fresh and creative also could not be found because the teenagers on social media LINE tend to use the slang which already exist in Sundanese. In addition, the acronym

slang that the teenagers use tend to come from English, such as “LOL” and “OTW”. Thus, the result of the research is the opposite of Crystal (2001) argument that says “The language online ‘netspeak’, contains a new kind of initialism, which is the general term for acronyms, abbreviations, and multi-word phrases that are compressed into a single word”.

In addition, there are interesting patterns that can be seen from this findings. Sundanese slang according to Warsa (2013) is usually not influenced by other languages, and there is almost no clipping type in it. Whereas, the teenagers in the data have a distinctive character, because the teenagers used many types of clipping slang, and slang words used are mostly a fussion or influenced by other languages. However, this finding is in line with Burdova (2009), who states that slang is influenced by many other languages, especially English.

To sum up, even though both previous and present studies used same classifications, this study shows different findings from the

previous study. Moreover, this study identifies three more slang types which are not found in the previous studies. Also, this study presents Sundanese slang which has not been studied by other researchers.

From the analysis of the factors triggering slang, there are three out of four factors applied in the teenagers conversations, namely settings, participants, functions, and topics. The factors were based on Holmes (2013) theory about social factor. The other one factor (functions) are not investigated further because there is no difference of the variables in that factor.

The previous studies and this study confirm one equal social factors, namely participants. Zhou (2013), Pedersen (2009), Reyes (2005), and the present study both emphasizes gender and age factors. Zhou (2013), Pedersen (2009), Reyes (2005), and the present study found that male teenagers used more slang than the females. This result is in accordance with Tannen (1990) who states that male have a tendency to use more slang than the women, but with the same spread of

understanding and performing. The main function of overall slang usage is to maintain their close relationship. Eble (1996) states that the use of same slang vocabulary helps to gain the acceptance in a group and to preserve group solidarity.

Moreover, the plot of each topic in this conversation is also different, the conversation which contained many interruption also contained more Sundanese slang. The topic which contains more slang are the one with serious and mockery tone. For the topics, informal topics such as leisure and miscellaneous have contained more slang words, because the atmosphere of conversation is more relaxed. Furthermore, in this conversation, teenagers are more able to execute themselves through the Sundanese language. This study's finding about genre is confirms the previous studies proposed by Richter (2006), and Reyes (2005). that the use of slang by adolescents also depend on the topic of their interlocutors.

In conclusion, the theory used by the present study is not the same as the previous studies. This leads to

the emergence of other social factors that did not appeared on the previous studies. The use of different participants, settings, and topics are also resulted in the use of different slang types.

CONCLUSION

The research investigates Sundanes slang used by the teenagers in Internet-based chat application. The research focuses on the Sundanese slang performed by high school students in their daily conversation on the social media "LINE". It particularly emphasizes on the types of slang. It also investigates the social factors that triggering the use of slang by the teenagers.

Based on the first analysis about the types of Sundanese slang words used by the teenagers on social media "LINE", the researcher found there are four types of slang employed by the teenagers on the application. The two types are the slang types proposed by Allan and Burrige (2006), there are imitative, and clipping. Moreover, there are two other slang types found in the present research: loan slang

(Kahn & Ison) and back slang (Potter, 1975), and they are categorised as other slang types which are found in the present research. The percentage of imitative type is 20%, other type with 23%, and clipping type with 57%. However, there are three other types based on Allan and Burrige (2006), which could not be found on the conversations, namely fresh and creative, acronym, and flippant.

In referring to the second analysis about the social factors triggering the use of Sundanese slang words used by the teenagers on "LINE", the researcher found three social factors which are discovered from the conversations. They are settings, participants, and topics. The first factor is settings. The results show that the types of slang which are mostly used on social media "LINE" setting is clipping, because the adolescent tend to shortened their words in order to simplify the time and to make the conversation easier. participant. The second factor is participant. The findings of this study show that male students tend to use more Sundanese slang than the

female students. The last factor is topics. Informal topics such as leisure and miscellaneous contains more slang words, because the atmosphere of conversation is more relaxed.

To be concluded, the findings of this study reveal that there are still some teenagers who use Sundanese language to communicate in their daily activity. Although the language that they use is Sundanese slang, this positive attitudes toward the language may hamper Sundanese language endangerment phenomenon, because at least the teenagers still have the desire to use some Sundanese words. Thus, it can be said that not all Sundanese teenagers in Bandung shows their negative attitudes towards Sundanese language.

Suggestions

Future researcher are suggested that they may focus on the use of slang by different respondents, different scopes, different time, and especially different setting. One such example is to identify Sundanese slang words in other cities in Indonesia where most people communicate

using Sundanese. The purpose of investigating in other Sundanese city is to enrich the Sundanese slang words that have not been discovered. Knowing many Sundanese slang will help us to maintain the Sundanese language, a language that is now rarely used by teenagers, especially in urban areas. We can preserve the language by teaching the young generation to use the slang first, because the youth prefer to use slang rather than the standard language. In addition, knowing many Sundanese slang words will help us to avoid misunderstanding when we are interact with native Sundanese speakers.

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