



Seeking Slang Words in "Last One Standing" Song: A Sociolinguistic Analysis

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Abstract

Sociolinguistics is the general term for the study of language that pays attention on the social aspects of language. This study focused on the role of language in society, or how members of various groups utilize language to communicate with one another. One of the many variations in language usage is slang. Therefore, the objectives of this study were to identify the types of slang and find the most frequent type of slang word in the "Last One Standing" song written by Skylar Grey. This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach since the researcher described the word development process of slang words in the song in detail. Documentation method was used to collect data for this study, which subsequently employed Yule's (2010) word formation processes to examine the slang words. Only six of eleven kinds were identified by the researcher: etymology, coinage, compounding, blending, clipping, and acronym. Based on the data, clipping is the most frequent slang in this song. It is hoped that this study would aid future sociolinguistics research, particularly slang analysis.

Keywords: *sociolinguistics; slang; song*

Introduction

Humans utilize language in order to communicate with one another. Due to the diversity of social contexts and human requirements, language is constantly evolving. Language plays a significant part in the social realm, as humans utilize it to communicate

with one another. In other words, language is a system of intentionally constructed symbols that pure humans use to transmit thoughts, feelings, and wants (Sapir, 1921). Therefore, people will communicate their thoughts, emotions, and desires through language. According to Meyer, (2009) language is tied to the culture and social structure of the community that uses it. From that description, sociolinguistics is a discipline of linguistics that examines the relationship between society and language. Typically, this field of study investigates the link between language and social relationships (Yule, 2014). Therefore, sociolinguistics can be defined as the study of a language that is tied to society, and that language will be changed by society.

Slang is a sociolinguistic phenomenon that is prevalent in contemporary life. Slang is a language or series of informal terms that is typically used by a subset of the population. Typically, slang refers to casual statements or terms that are intended to make communication more relaxed, colorful, and engaging. It is supported by the fact that Yanchung and Yanhong state in (Pangestu, 2019) that "slang is part of a language that deviates from the standard usage of everyday language and may include new vocabularies and phrases with extended meanings attached to the original terms or words that belong to a particular group." Consequently, slang language is typically used in group settings. Teenagers frequently use slang to make their talks with their pals more informal and intimate. Another example is common lingo that is also utilized in songs, particularly pop songs made by songwriters to reach a large audience. Sociolinguistics academics may find the study of slang words to be particularly intriguing due to the fact that slang words are intimately and directly tied to society and the environment. When a language is used in a variety of contexts, words will evolve. Word formation process is another name for this phenomenon. Word formation is the transformation of a word from its old form to its new form. I don't know expressed as IDK is the small example of slang. According to (Yule, 2010), it is developed from I don't know through the process of acronym formation. In this case, slang is derived through changes in linguistic communication, regardless of the meaning and content of the expressions utilized. Nevertheless, it also relies on the specific circumstances. Therefore, it can be asserted that slang words play a crucial part in the usage of common language in our culture.

Due to the fact that slang is an informal language, it is frequently used by a large number of individuals, hence the phenomena of slang usage can be observed in a variety of settings. As previously said, slang is also included in song lyrics. Using a collection of one's experiences or what others have experienced, felt, seen, and written into a piece of writing is how song lyrics are created. Usually, songwriters utilize slang terms or informal language to enhance the beauty of the songs they compose by communicating their meaning or experience. Music and song lyrics play a vital function in society as a traditional form of communication when they are performed. The performer can also convey the message to the audience through music (Puspitorini & Narawaty, 2020). Similarly, Dallin argued in (Firdaus, 2013) that lyric writing is a sort of interaction between the author and the audience. Therefore, it can be stated that there is a close relationship between music and the lyrics of a song when it comes to communicating ideas through the use of language.

The researcher is interested in analyzing the lyrics of Skylar Grey's song "Last One

Standing" The lyrics to this song contain a lot of slang words, according to researcher. According to this song lyrics by Skylar Grey, there are many slang words found. The line "When I gotta look down and see these clowns that are on the ground?" is one of the examples found. The slang word for this lyric is "gotta," that was discovered by the researcher. In written English, the word "gotta" is used to express the informal pronunciation of the words "got to," which means "have to" or "must." This word is typically used to convey a pressing need. One of slang's hallmarks is this occurrence. It must therefore be "When I got to look down and see these clowns that are on the ground?" if it switches to the formal language. The slang words in the song's lyrics are still accepted and enjoyed by society. In order to uncover and examine the slang that was used in the song, the researcher in this study also dug further into other songs. The decision to use Skylar Grey's "Last One Standing" as a research object was made for the specific purpose of studying the language used in the song's lyrics. Additionally, American rappers Polo G, Mozzy, and Eminem are included in the song "Last One Standing" by American singer Skylar Gray. The lyrics of these rappers are also frequently studied by academics. The researcher did slang study in order to convey some information of slang based on the slang types and slang functions, as it has been indicated from the description of the backdrop given above. As a result, the research question for this study is as follows: What are the types and the most frequent slang used in the "Last One Standing" song?

As stated above, there have actually been some prior studies that have discussed slang words in songs using a sociolinguistics method. For instance, Putri & Zakrimal's research from 2019 successfully examined the many slang words found in Mariah Carey's song lyrics. In order to identify the slang types that appeared in that song the most frequently, the use word formation process by Yule, (2010). According to the findings they discovered 11 different sorts of slang words in the lyrics of a Mariah Carey song. Slang words can be classified according to their etymology, coinage, borrowing, etc. According to their analysis, clipping is the slang type that appears in the song the most frequently. Similar to the first study, the second study by Siahaan et al., (2021) examined the use of slang words in song lyrics from the album *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?* by Billie Eilish to identify the most common slang word types. The six sorts of slang types they discovered in Billie Eilish's songs are coinage, borrowing, compounding, blending, clipping, and derivation.

The next study, carried out by Siringoringo & Marpaung (2022), examined the use of slang in the lyrics of a song by Agnes Monica. They sought to identify the slang types and features present in the chosen music using Yule's hypothesis. Based on their analysis of the song, three categories of slang were discovered, with clipping, coinage, and blending being the most prevalent. The last, Sulatra & Utami, (2022) conducted a research of slang words in song lyrics by Megan Thee Stallion on the *Tina Snow* Album, their study utilized two separate theories by Kipfer and Chapman (2007) and Mattiello (2008). This study sought to identify the sorts of slang words as well as the method used to create slang words in the song lyrics, which was somewhat different from the three previous studies mentioned above. This earlier study demonstrates that primary slang and secondary slang are the two categories of slang that can be discovered in song lyrics.

After gathering various sources on sociolinguistic research from earlier studies, which served as a guide for the slang analysis of the song. It is clear that all studies aim to analyze slang words, but there are differences in the object, subject, and framework of the research. This study looks at the various slang types that may be found in song lyrics and highlights the most frequent one in Skylar Grey's "Last One Standing" lyrics. Although employing nearly the same theory and methodology, notably word formation processes by (Yule, 2010) and the sociolinguistics approach, it is hoped that this study will still be useful for future sociolinguistics research, particularly slang analysis.

Method

Discussions of research studies are intrinsically tied to methodology. Because the methodology used determines the fundamental nature of the work performed to support a research topic. According to (Arikunto, 2006), the research methodology is important since it affects the caliber of the research findings and the success or failure of the investigation. The fact that the data and analysis are presented in the form of words and descriptions indicates that the study is using a qualitative descriptive method. According to Ary et al., (2010), qualitative researchers are more likely to concur with descriptive data presented in the form of words and images than with numerical and statistical information. According to Wirartha, (2006), descriptive qualitative research entails using data acquired from interviews or field observations related to the issues under inquiry to evaluate, characterize, and summarize a variety of settings and scenarios. The research's data include lyrics from Skylar Grey's "Last One Standing" that contain slang words.

The researcher employed the documentation approach to obtain the data, and the lyric was taken from the internet. The word formation on Yule's (2010) book was connected by the researcher to this study. Writing, categorizing, and describing the types and word production process of slang words in the song are the steps of data analysis in this study. First, the researcher noted down any slang words found in the song's lyrics. For ease of data analysis, the researcher divided slang word generation into several categories in the second step before dividing word processes into similar categories. Etymology, compounding, multiple processes, clipping, acronym, back-formation, coinage, blending, conversion, borrowing, and derivation are the several types of word formation of slang that searched in this study. In the third, the researcher discusses the various slang word categories and find out the most frequent type of slang in the lyrics of the "Last One Standing" song.

Results

Based on Yule (2010) of several sorts of word formation processes, the researcher examined the data. Etymology, Coinage, Borrowing, Compounding, Blending, Clipping, Backformation, Conversion, Acronym, Derivation, and Multiple Process are the eleven categories into which each slang term identified in the lyrics was broken down. Only six of the song's eleven categories were discovered by the researcher.

Table 1. Types of slang words found on "Last One Standing" song

Types of Slang Words	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Etymology	2	6,45 %
Coinage	4	12,90 %
Borrowing	0	0 %
Compounding	1	3,23 %
Blending	5	16,13 %
Clipping	18	58,06 %
Backformation	0	0 %
Conversion	0	0 %
Acronym	1	3,23 %
Derivation	0	0 %
Multiple Process	0	0 %
Total	31	100 %

From the table above, the most dominant slang found in the "Last One Standing" song is clipping with 58,06 % percentage, followed by blending 16,13 %, coinage 12,90 %, etymology 6,45 %, and compounding 3,23 % as well as the acronym.

Discussion

From the data obtained, the discussion of each slang found in "Last One Standing" song by Skylar Grey are as follow:

1. Etymology

The study of word origins and word evolution is known as etymology. It indicates that a word's current form shift has a history from the past. Two slang words from this category of vocabulary were discovered in the "Last One Standing" song.

- *White Zomb' in the **stogey**, stood firm, never folded* (Line 38)

The term "stogey," which is slang for any long, cylindrical cheap cigar, is used in this lyric. Conestoga, a town in Pennsylvania, is the source of the slang term stogey or stogy (Collins English Dictionary, n.d); one of the first Pennsylvania cigar companies was the Conestoga Cigar Company (1880s). However, it appears that the author of this lyric frequently uses the word "stogey" to refer to Conestoga itself.

- *Furthest thing from a rodent, you put the jacket on and you **bogus*** (Line 39)

As indicated in the lyric above, the next slang word that comes from etymology is "bogus." This word conveys the idea that something is fake. A "bogus" in the early 19th century was a coin-counterfeiting mechanism. Nobody is certain how this coin-copying device gained its name, but "bogus" soon came to mean fake money or any other fraudulent imitation (Merriam-Webster, n.d).

2. Coinage

Coinage is the creation of entirely new terminology. The most frequent sources are fictitious trade names for manufactured goods that are generalized to refer to any variation of that product (often without capital letters). The researcher discovered four slang names in this song that were coined entirely independently of any commercial products.

- *Why would you leave me here by myself? A **nigga** be lonely* (Line 35)

The researcher discovered the slang term "nigga"—most often used by African Americans—to indicate a greeting for someone in this lyric. The word nigga is another manner or a variety to greet a buddy with a new word made either intentionally or unintentionally, hence this slang falls under the category of coinage. The usage of this word by certain Black individuals to describe themselves or another Black person in a neutral or positive way can be disrespectful at times (Merriam-Webster, n.d).

- *Yeah, big **dawg** and they know it* (Line 40)

The slang term "dawg" follows. This is slang for saying words like "man," "buddy," or "dude." Particularly, it was used as a familiar term of address (Merriam-Webster, n.d). The word "dawg" is also another manner or a variety to welcome a guy or male friend with a brand-new word that was either intentionally invented or formed by accident, making this slang a coinage.

- *You don't see the strength and resilience (**nah**)* (Line 68)

In this lyric, the term "nah" is slang. According to the Collins English Dictionary (n.d.), the slang word "nah" is frequently used as a colloquial way of saying "no." In casual writing and text messages, this word is frequently employed. Therefore, this term is considered a coinage because "nah" is another way to communicate "no" using a brand-new word that was either intentionally or unintentionally produced. Typically, the word "nah" is a slang term used in Cockney English and several American dialects.

- ***Bitch**, I got clouds beneath me* (Line 89)

The word "Bitch" in line 88 of the lyrics is the final coined slang term used in this song. Although it's a widespread slang term, being called a "bitch" to a woman or a guy is offensive. This is due to the fact word "bitch" also denotes someone who is vindictive, spiteful, or domineering (Merriam-Webster, n.d). As a result, this word is considered to be a coinage as "bitch" is another version used to disparage a specific individual.

3. **Compounding**

Combining two different words to create a new form. Technically referred to as compounding, this technique of mixing words occurs frequently in languages like German and English but far less frequently in languages like French and Spanish. Plag, (2003) defined compounding as the fusion of two words to create a brand-new term.

It implies that two words can be combined into a single form or a brand-new language. The researcher only discovered one slang term associated with compounding in the song.

- *Young nigga on **bullshit** and I ball on 'em, Bill Cartwright* (Line 11)

The colloquial term "Bullshit" is a compound word since it is made up of the free morphemes bull and shit. They are each a whole word on their own. This slang word is undergoing a compounding process in which the words "bull" and "shit" combine to create a new lexical item with a meaning distinct from the original words. According to the Collins English Dictionary (n.d.), the term "bullshit" refers to statements that are absurd or wholly incorrect.

4. *Blending*

Blending, which is the fusion of two different terms to create a single new word, is also a part of the process. The process of blending usually involves linking the beginning of one word to the end of another. There were five slang words created in the song "Last One Standing" by Skylar Grey that are a part of this kind of word formation process.

- *Took a million risks just to get to this 'cause we **ain't** the ones that the cops like* (Line 15)

Many speakers frequently use the slang word "ain't" in oral and informal contexts, particularly in some areas and dialects. Its use is frequently highly stigmatized, and the general public may interpret it as a sign of low socioeconomic position, regional status, or educational attainment. Dictionaries and style manuals typically view its use as non-standard when it is employed rhetorically. Because "Ain't" is frequently used to blend an auxiliary for adjectives in the negative form, such as is + not, am + not, and are + not, this slang word belongs to the blending process. It may alternatively be abbreviated as have + not or has + not. Because of this, individuals occasionally substitute ain't for am not, are not, is not, have not, and has not.

- *They commentin' all on the blogs, **tryna** tell me how to live my life* (Line 17)

Informally, the slang word "tryna" is used to indicate that someone is "trying to." In contrast to "attempting to," the colloquial meaning of the slang word "tryna" belong to blending process," which is composed of the contraction of "trying+to" and is typically followed by a bare verb, is "want to" or "desire to"

- *Live by the gun, get bodied or it's **hella** time in that cell* (Line 31)

Hella is a colloquial term formed by combining the words "hell" and "of" as an intensifier for adjectival adjectives. According to Merriam-Webster (n.d), the slang term hella can be used to describe anything as very, exceedingly, or a lot of. Hella, a slang word, is utilized to make a strong statement about "the time in that cell" in the aforementioned lyric.

- ***Y'all*** say (*what?*), *I've changed (huh)* (Line 52)
The researcher discovered the slang term "Y'all" in the abovementioned lyric. "You all" might be said informally using this slang term. When addressing a group of two or more persons in the South of the United States, folks use "y'all" (Collins English Dictionary, n.d.).

- *When I **gotta** look down and see these clowns that are on the ground?* (Line 88)
The slang term "gotta" can be found in this lyric. In written or spoken English, the word "gotta" is used to symbolize the words "got" and "to" when they are pronounced colloquially and have the meanings "have to" or "must." This slang word is typically used to convey a pressing need.

5. **Clipping**

The clipping process makes the reduction component that is seen in blending even more obvious. This happens when a word with more than one syllable—in this case, facsimile—is shortened to a shorter form, usually at the start of informal discourse but not always. It is frequently referred to by abbreviation. This type of slang predominates in the song "Last One Standing," where the researcher discovered 18 slang terms sprinkled throughout the lyrics. The following list of 18 slang terms with a brief explanation is provided:

- **Standin'** (Line 1): Comes from the word **standing**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **'Em** (Line 11): Comes from the word **them**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'th' part from the original word.
- **'Cause** (Line 15): Comes from the word **because**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'be' part from the original word.
- **Commentin'** (Line 17): Comes from the word **commenting**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **Thankin'** (Line 19): Comes from the word **thanking**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **Savin'** (Line 19): Comes from the word **saving**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **Showcasin'** (Line 20): Comes from the word **showcasing**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **Comin'** (Line 34): Comes from the word **coming**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **Leavin'** (Line 36): Comes from the word **leaving**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **Zomb'** (Line 38): Comes from the word **zombie**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'ie' part from the original word.
- **Longev'** (Line 42): Comes from the word **longevity**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'ity' part from the original word.

- **'Til** (Line 62): Comes from the word **until**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'un' part from the original word.
- **Healin'** (Line 70): Comes from the word **healing**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **Escapin'** (Line 70): Comes from the word **escaping**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **Recreatin'** (Line 71): Comes from the word **recreating**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **Feelin'** (Line 71): Comes from the word **feeling**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **Havin'** (Line 74): Comes from the word **having**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.
- **Lookin'** (Line 78): Comes from the word **looking**, this slang word is called clipping because it removes the 'g' part from the original word.

6. Acronym

Acronyms are new words created by combining the first letters of several other words. It is also sometimes referred to as an acronym. These can take the shape of devices like the CD, which is pronounced "compact disk," or the VCR, which is pronounced "video cassette recorder," where each letter is said separately. As in NATO, NASA, or UNESCO, acronyms are more frequently spoken as brand-new single words. The researcher only discovered one slang acronym-related process here.

- *Ever since I put out the **EP** to the height of 2003 me* (Line 90)

Because it is made up of the first letters of several other words, the word EP in the line above is an acronym. Extended play, or EP, is a term that is frequently used to refer to a musical recording that is shorter than an entire album, about four to seven tracks (Collins English Dictionary, n.d.). EP is another way to spell "European plan" (in hotels). EP can occasionally stand in for episode (Written as ep). It appears that EP was employed in this lyric to shorten and speed up the word "Extended Play".

Conclusion

The writer discovered 31 slang terms from the song "Last One Standing" after examining the data that was covered in the previous chapter. The writer then analyzed all of the data. Using the word formation processes revealed in this song, this research has identified six categories of slang. Etymology, coinage, compounding, blending, clipping, and acronym are some of the terms. Clipping was the most frequent word formation process among the six categories, occurring 58,06% of the frequency. Not all word forms, though, are covered by the data. Five of eleven-word formation listed in the theoretical model aren't present in the research. Borrowing, back formation, conversion, derivation, and multiple processes are among them. Thus, it can be said that slang words play a significant part in the creation of song lyrics. As a result, the song writer can incorporate slang words into the lyrics to convey their feelings, and doing so will draw listeners to the songs.

Based on the findings, it is intended that this study would aid future sociolinguistics research, particularly those focusing on the variety of languages. One of them is slang, which can be heard or seen in daily life or the environment. The researcher in this study also suggest that further research would be conducted using another method or approach to provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding about slang used in the song.

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