

Slang Words in Playing Online Games: A Focus on Pubg Mobile

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Abstract:

Slang in general refers to informal language that consists of words, phrases, and expressions used predominantly in casual conversation rather than formal writing. This qualitative research explores the use of slang in the popular mobile game PUBG Mobile and understands how this language reflects social identity and communication. The study employs discourse analysis and participatory observation methods to gather data from in-game sessions and online forums. The researcher actively participated in PUBG gaming sessions, engaging in conversations with players during gameplay. In addition, online forums and chat boxes dedicated to PUBG were observed to determine how slang was used in various contexts. Conversations were recorded with the consent of players during these sessions to ensure the authenticity and accuracy of the data. After data collection, the recorded conversations were transcribed, ensuring that the content and context of the slang used were maintained. The results of direct conversations between researchers and players were recorded and then transcribed to be classified into slang forms following Allan and Burridge's (2006) framework. This study found that PUBG players use slang such as, fresh and creative, flippant, imitative, acronym and clipping.

Keywords: Slang; PUBG Mobile; gaming community; social identity; digital communication

Abstrak:

Bahasa gaul secara umum merujuk pada bahasa informal yang terdiri dari kata, frasa, dan ekspresi yang digunakan terutama dalam percakapan santai daripada tulisan formal. Penelitian kualitatif ini mengeksplorasi penggunaan bahasa gaul dalam gim seluler populer PUBG Mobile dan memahami bagaimana bahasa ini mencerminkan identitas sosial dan komunikasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan analisis wacana dan metode observasi partisipatif untuk mengumpulkan data dari sesi dalam gim dan forum daring. Peneliti berpartisipasi aktif dalam sesi gim PUBG, terlibat dalam percakapan dengan pemain selama permainan. Selain itu, forum daring dan kotak obrolan khusus PUBG diamati untuk menentukan bagaimana bahasa gaul digunakan dalam berbagai konteks. Percakapan direkam dengan persetujuan pemain selama sesi ini untuk memastikan keaslian dan keakuratan data. Setelah pengumpulan data, percakapan yang direkam ditranskripsi, memastikan bahwa konten dan konteks bahasa gaul yang digunakan tetap terjaga. Hasil percakapan langsung antara peneliti dan pemain direkam dan kemudian ditranskripsi untuk diklasifikasikan ke dalam bentuk bahasa gaul mengikuti kerangka kerja Allan dan Burridge (2006). Studi ini menemukan bahwa

pemain PUBG menggunakan bahasa gaul seperti, segar dan kreatif, sembrono, imitatif, akronim, dan klipng.

Kata kunci: Slang, PUBG *Mobile*, komunitas *gaming*, identitas sosial, komunikasi digital

INTRODUCTION

Slang is something that everybody can recognize but nobody can define. The literal meaning of slang according to the Oxford dictionary is a type of language consisting of words and phrases that are regarded as very informal, are more common in speech than writing, and are typically restricted to a particular context or group of people (Muhartoyo & Wijaya, 2014). Researcher uses slang to achieve social dynamics with the people to whom he/she is speaking and slang outlines social spaces, and attitudes towards slang to help identify and construct social groups and identity (Adams, 2009).

In online games, players can interact or communicate directly with other players by speaking on their mic or chatting in the chat box. The developer of the game usually has implemented a system that enables players to interact and communicate with other players. The system implemented is called the chat system which includes voice chat and team chat which facilitates players to interact and communicate in the game and it is common for players to incorporate slang words into their communication (Kamal & Gayo, n.d.). They use slang both verbally and text through the chat-box feature which is usually available in the games they play.

PUBG Mobile is an FPS game developed by Tencent Games and can be played on mobile phones, IPAD/TAB, and PC. This game is popular with young people because the appearance and visuals of the game are attractive and not boring because it has many maps to play. And this game contains competitive elements that can be played in groups, namely 4vs4. This game also has its own terms in the game. The use of slang by Gen Z in online games, especially PUBG, is indeed interesting to study. This is considered interesting because researchers found several slang languages that are less known by Gen Z in playing online games. In addition, this type of online game is also quite popular among young people or Gen Z.

Moreover, many other researchers have analyzed the PUBG mobile game from various topics. One of them, (Nguyen and Khuat Thi, 2015), focused on the educational side of game slang, studying how frequent exposure to slang in games like PUBG can

affect language acquisition and adaptation, especially in non-native English-speaking communities. They observed that players often adopt game slang terms into their daily communication, which influences language trends in a broader social context.

This research is aimed to analyze slang words in the PUBG Mobile game. This study aims to examine the types of slang words and their frequency in the PUBG Mobile game. This research attempts to answer the questions: (1) What are the types of slang words in the PUBG game? (2) How are the situation and condition of the players when they say the slang words?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Slang in Youth Communication

Slang in youth communication functions as a unique and distinctive form of self-expression. In the context of the PUBG Mobile game, the use of slang often creates solidarity among players, especially when communicating with fellow young players. The slang used in this game includes short words and phrases that are specifically understood by the player community, such as "knock," "revive," and "loot," which are often not understood by people outside the gaming circle. This shows that slang in the digital gaming environment acts as an effective communication bridge and strengthens social relationships. Language variation, slang, is one of the recently language uses in mostly teenager interaction. They use this language variation in having various types and reasons (Nuraeni et al., 2021).

Young people frequently use language creatively to set themselves apart and create a common identity, according to study by (Bucholtz, 2002). This is especially true in digital areas where slang has grown into its own ecosystem. Furthermore, slang in online gaming fosters the cooperative aspect of multiplayer games while also strengthening friendships. Because fast-paced games necessitate a language economy, players frequently adopt concise terminology or condense phrases to facilitate communication. According to (Nuraeni et al., 2021), these expressions act as a social glue that holds players together through their struggles and experiences in addition to being a useful form of communication.

Slang in Digital Communication

Slang in digital communication on social media is one of the important elements used by young people to express themselves quickly and efficiently. The use of slang reflects group identity, strengthens relationships, and facilitates informal communication. In addition, the speed of slang spread on social media allows the language to develop dynamically, often following viral trends and memes. According to Jeresano & Carretero (2022), Social media slang has been widespread due to fast emerging trend of online platforms. These slang in fact manifest the culture of the digital natives called the Gen Zers or those who belong to Generation Z.

This slang functions not only as a means of quick communication but also as a way to establish group identity. Gen Zers use a variety of linguistic processes like clipping, compounding, and connotation shifts to create unique slang that fits the informal, fast-paced nature of online platforms. For instance, phrases like "sana all" (a combination of English and Filipino) or clipped terms like "char" for "charot" showcase Gen Z's creativity and adaptability in digital language.

RESEARCH METHODS

The subject of this study was studied using a descriptive qualitative approach. The descriptive data research method is the most appropriate method for evaluating data, and this data can be used because it is expected to provide a complete picture of slang. According to Allan and Burridge's (2006), qualitative research aims to explain social phenomena. This approach is used well because there is no quantity to be taken, and the facts are analyzed in depth. The qualitative method looks at the characteristics of the techniques used in the data to determine the types of slang spoken by players when playing PUBG mobile. Therefore, the descriptive qualitative method is appropriate for analyzing "Slang Words in Playing Online Games: A Focus on Pubg Mobile."

The subject of this study is PUBG mobile players. The researcher chose PUBG mobile players because PUBG mobile itself is one of the most popular mobile battle games that has many fans compared to other types of mobile gaming with a very large player base and often involves intense verbal interaction.

In data collection, the researcher used participatory observation by participating in PUBG mobile tournament activities carried out online. The researcher logs in on one of

the personal phones as a player, then records the voice of the other player's conversation and translates it into English. Then it is transcribed and the data is rechecked for accuracy, the slang is identified, then the researcher will classify it by analyzing its meaning by looking at the context according to Allan and Burridge's (2006).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. PUBG Mobile player frequency

| Slang Words | Frequency |
|----------------|-----------|
| Chicken dinner | 3 |
| Clutch | 3 |
| Looting | 4 |
| Sandwich | 2 |
| Knock down | 3 |
| Revive | 4 |
| OTW | 3 |
| AFK | 2 |
| GG | 4 |
| AIM | 2 |
| | |
| total | 30 |

Table 2. Types of slang words in PUBG Mobile

| Types of slang words | Example |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Fresh and Creative | Chicken Dinner, Clutch |
| Flippant | Looting, Sandwich |
| Imitative | Knock Down, Revive |
| Acronym | OTW, AFK, GG |
| Clipping | Aim |

Data 1

Chicken Dinner

“Yeayy, akhirnya chicken dinner juga ya kita setelah tosoon berkali-kali haha”
 (Yay, finally we had chicken dinner after tosooning so many times haha)

The term "Chicken Dinner" is a well-known phrase between PUBG players, often exclaimed when someone wins a match. Originating with the phrase "Winner, winner, chicken dinner!" within the gaming community, this slang has become synonymous with victory. In this context, "chicken dinner" represents a job well done and connects players through a shared language of triumph.

Though "dinner" typically refers to a main evening meal, here it is used metaphorically and playfully to represent a reward for survival and skill. Expressions like "tosoon" also add to the community spirit, humorously referencing frequent losses or early eliminations and reminding players of their shared experiences. Together, these terms create camaraderie among players, forming a friendly yet competitive space where slang enriches the gaming experience and fosters a social community.

Data 2

Clutch

"Widih keren banget kamu Zen, bisa nge clutch musuh 1 squad"

(Wow, you're so cool Zen, you can clutch a squad of enemies)

The term "Clutch" has become a vital part of the gaming lexicon, specifically in *PUBG*, signifying an extraordinary achievement when a player manages to turn the tide of a game, often against overwhelming odds. Originating with the phrase "Clutch" within the gaming community, this slang has become synonymous with grip. In this context, Zen is celebrated for his ability to overcome a squad of enemies single-handedly, showcasing not only skill but also composure under pressure.

The phrase embodies a moment of triumph and enhances camaraderie among players, who share stories of clutch moments as highlights of their gaming experience. This slang term contributes to the culture of competitive gaming, where such feats are admired and inspire others to improve their gameplay.

Data 3

Looting

"Ayoo looting disini guys banyak senjata bagus!"

(Let's loot here guys, there are lots of good weapons!)

The term "Looting" is central to the gameplay of *PUBG*, as it denotes the act of searching for and collecting valuable items that enhance a player's chances of survival. Originating with the phrase "Loot" within the gaming community, this slang has become synonymous with plunder. In this context, "Looting" emphasizes teamwork and strategy, as players often need to coordinate their looting efforts to maximize their resources.

The use of "guys" in the sentence fosters a sense of community and collaboration, highlighting how players depend on one another to thrive in the game's competitive

environment. The term encapsulates both the thrill of discovery and the strategic importance of resource management, integral elements of the gaming experience.

Data 4

Sandwich

“Kita gabisa pergi kemana-mana karna posisi kita ke sandwich berada di antara musuh perang”
(We can’t go anywhere because our position to the sandwich is between the war enemies)

The term “Sandwich” describes a precarious situation in a game where players find themselves sandwiched between opponents, creating a tactical disadvantage. Originating with the phrase “Stuck” within the gaming community, this slang has become synonymous with surrounded. Though “sandwich” usually refers to food, here the word is used metaphorically to capture the essence that emphasizes the urgency and tension of the moment.

In PUBG, such a scenario requires quick thinking and teamwork to escape, which adds to the excitement of the game. The phrase evokes a clear image of being trapped, fosters a shared understanding among players of the challenges they face, and underscores the importance of position in competitive play.

Data 5

Knock Down

“Eh itu sudah aku knock down in 1 orang, sisa 3 orang lagi ya di depan”
(Eh, I’ve knocked down 1 person, there are 3 more people left in front)

The phrase “Knock Down” is integral to the combat mechanics of *PUBG*, denoting the successful incapacitation of an opponent, which can shift the dynamics of a match. Originating with the phrase “Knocked Down” within the gaming community, this slang has become synonymous with knock. In this context this term highlights the tactical aspect of gameplay, as players aim to eliminate threats while avoiding their own elimination.

By acknowledging the number of remaining opponents, the speaker indicates a strategic awareness of the battlefield. The phrase fosters a competitive spirit among players, as knocking down opponents is often a precursor to victory, reinforcing teamwork and collaboration in achieving shared objectives.

Data 6

Revive

“Tolong revive aku dong, posisiku aman kok”

(Please revive me, my position is safe)

The term "Revive" emphasizes the importance of teamwork in *PUBG*, as players rely on one another to recover from being downed. Originating with the phrase “Revive” within the gaming community, this slang has become synonymous with resurrect. In the context of this action, not merely a mechanic but a demonstration of camaraderie and trust within a team. The speaker's assurance of safety indicates strategic positioning, which is vital during revives to avoid further eliminations. This slang fosters a cooperative culture, encouraging players to communicate effectively and support each other during intense gameplay, ultimately enhancing the overall gaming experience.

Data 7

OTW

“Di depan Leo arah bukit ada musuh, ayo Zen kita OTW ke sana!”

(In front of Leo towards the hill there are enemies, come on Zen let's go there!)

The abbreviation "OTW" is a practical term in the fast-paced environment of *PUBG*, facilitating quick communication between players. Originating with the phrase "On The Way" within the gaming community, this slang has become synonymous with in passage. In this context, indicates immediate action, which is crucial for survival during matches.

The phrase fosters teamwork by urging players to regroup and strategize collaboratively. Using such abbreviations not only reflects the dynamic nature of online communication but also enhances the efficiency of in-game tactics, reinforcing a sense of unity and shared objectives among team members.

Data 8

AFK

“Eh ini ada musuh, lagi “AFK” kayaknya. Soalnya dia diem aja ga nembak sama sekali”

(Hey, there's an enemy, he's “AFK” I think. Because he's just standing still and not shooting at all)

The term "AFK" is commonly used to identify players who are momentarily inactive, impacting gameplay dynamics. Originating with the phrase "Away From Keyboard" within the gaming community, this slang has become synonymous with offline. In this

context, an AFK opponent can represent an easy target, altering the strategy of active players.

The use of this term highlights the competitive edge players seek in matches, as well as the importance of maintaining focus and engagement during gameplay. Moreover, it underscores the social aspect of gaming, where awareness of each other's statuses can lead to strategic advantages, enhancing the collective experience.

Data 9

GG

“Permainan mu GG banget leo, pasti kamu main PUBG sudah dari lama”
(Your game is really GG Leo, you must have been playing PUBG for a long time)

The term "GG" encapsulates the essence of sportsmanship in gaming, expressing respect and appreciation for the efforts of all players involved. Originating with the phrase "Good Game" within the gaming community, this slang has become synonymous with GGWP (Good Game, Well Played). In the PUBG context, it fosters goodwill and camaraderie, reinforcing the idea that gaming is not solely about winning but also about enjoying the experience and learning from each match. This phrase serves as a universal acknowledgment of effort and skill, enhancing the social fabric of the gaming community and promoting positive interactions among players.

Data 10

AIM

“AIM kamu sangat bagus zen dalam nembak musuh yang jaraknya jauh itu”
(Your AIM is really good Zen in shooting enemies from a long distance)

The term "aim" is crucial in *PUBG*, as accurate targeting significantly impacts gameplay success. Originating with the phrase "AIM" within the gaming community, this slang has become synonymous with target. In this context, a player's ability to aim and shoot enemies precisely. Praising Zen's aim highlights the importance of skill in shooting mechanics and reflects the competitive nature of the game.

DISCUSSION

A slang is a vocabulary (words, phrases, and linguistic usages) of an informal register, common in everyday conversation but avoided in formal writing. It also often refers to the

language exclusively used by the members of particular in-groups in order to establish group identity, exclude outsiders, or both.

According to (Nguyen and Khuat Thi, 2015), focused on the educational side of game slang, studying how frequent exposure to slang in games like PUBG can affect language acquisition and adaptation, especially in non-native English-speaking communities. So that it can function to influence language acquisition and adaptation, especially in non-native English-speaking communities.

CONCLUSION(S)

In conclusion, the use of slang in online gaming, particularly in *PUBG Mobile*, acts as a distinctive communication tool that fosters group identity, facilitates efficient communication, and reflects the shared experiences of players, especially among Gen Z. This unique language serves both practical and social functions in the digital environment, allowing players to connect and form bonds within a competitive setting (Kurniawan & Fitriani, 2019; Nguyen & Khuat Thi, 2015). Through methods like descriptive qualitative research and participatory observation, the study reveals that slang in online games not only enhances communication but also helps players adapt language skills, potentially impacting language learning and cultural adaptation for non-native speakers in an informal, engaging setting.

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