CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a fundamental tool of human communication that allows individuals to express ideas, opinions, emotions, and identities in various contexts. It is dynamic and constantly changes according to social, cultural, and technological developments. These changes give rise to language variations, one of which is slang. Slang is a non-standard and informal variety often used within particular groups as a marker of identity, intimacy, and creativity. Allan and Burridge (2006) emphasize that slang plays a distinctive role in everyday interactions because it not only creates new words but also functions as a code understood within a community.

The development of digital technology and social media has further accelerated the use and spread of slang. Social media platforms such as YouTube have become popular spaces where people share opinions and interact freely. In YouTube's comment sections, users often employ slang expressions to react, criticize, or support ideas in a casual manner. This shows that slang is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but also a reflection of digital culture and collective identity in online communities.

In Indonesia, YouTube has become one of the most influential media platforms for political discussions. During the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential debates, YouTube played a significant role as millions of viewers followed the live broadcast and actively responded in the comment sections. These debates featured candidates such as Anies Baswedan–Muhaimin Iskandar, Ganjar Pranowo–Mahfud MD, and Prabowo Subianto–Gibran Rakabuming Raka. The audience's engagement was not only evident through viewership but also through their comments, many of which employed slang to express emotions and political attitudes. For instance, the word gemoy, derived from gemas ("cute"), was widely used to describe one candidate in a humorous and expressive way. This illustrates how slang can shape political discourse in the digital era.

A number of previous studies have examined the use of slang in different contexts. Yusuf (2017) investigated slang in political discourse and showed how politicians used informal expressions to attract attention, criticize rivals, and build their image. In the field of social media, As'adi (2021) analyzed slang in YouTube comments and revealed that netizens frequently created new expressions to communicate in casual and creative ways. Similarly, Suparyana (2022) studied slang in YouTube comments and categorized the findings into several types, such as fresh and creative, flippant, imitative, acronyms, and clipping.

Other studies have also provided insights into the role of slang in digital communication. Ulandari (2021) explored slang in Instagram comments from celebrity and political accounts, showing how slang was used to express closeness and identity within online communities. In a different setting, Hossain (2018) examined political slang in online news comments during the U.S. presidential election, while Bibi and Rafi (2023) analyzed Imran Khan's political speeches in Pakistan, highlighting how informal language can be strategically used to appeal to the public. More recently, Sitanggang (2023) investigated slang in a YouTube podcast and identified various forms of slang that emerged from casual interactions in digital media.

From these studies, it is evident that slang plays an important role in both everyday communication and political discourse, particularly within digital platforms. However, none of these previous studies specifically examined the use of slang in YouTube comments on the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice-presidential debates. This gap highlights the importance of the present research.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze slang words used in YouTube comments on the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice-presidential debates. It focuses on identifying the types, meanings, and functions of slang based on Allan and Burridge's (2006) theory of slang and supported by theories of language functions proposed by Jakobson (in Soeparno, 2002) and Partridge (in Martinus, 2018). This study is expected to contribute to sociolinguistic research by showing how informal language reflects political participation, online community behavior, and the dynamics of communication in Indonesia's digital society.

1.2 Identification of Problems

From the background explained above, as time goes by, language continues to change, resulting in the emergence of slang words. These slang words arise from social interactions from very diverse communities or groups. One example is the debate between presidential and vice presidential candidates, which was widely watched live streaming on the YouTube platform. Various slang words were found in the Comments column of the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice presidential debate video. Based on this, researchers will identify more deeply the types, functions, and meanings of slang words in the YouTube Comments column related to the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice presidential debate.

1.3 Research Scope

Based on the problem identification above, this research will examine the use of slang words in the YouTube Comments column during the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice presidential debates.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the background above, the researcher formulated the problem with two formulations, namely:

1. What are the types and meanings of slang words used in the YouTube Comments column during the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice presidential debates?

2. What is the function of the slang words used in the YouTube Comment column during the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice presidential candidate debate?

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the problem formulation above, this research has the following objectives:

1. To find out the types and meanings of the slang words used in the YouTube Comment column during the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice presidential candidate debate.

2. To find out the function of the slang used in the YouTube Comment column during the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice presidential candidate debate.

1.6 Research Significances

Research on slang words in the YouTube Comments column during the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice presidential candidate debate provides several benefits. There are two benefits of this research, namely:

1.6. 1 Theoretically Significance

1. Research

     This research can be a practical learning resource to expand knowledge about slang and how the theories studied in this research can be applied to educational needs or everyday life.

2. For other researchers

     This research can provide useful information and be a reference for future sociolinguistic studies, especially those related to slang words. In addition, this research can increase understanding of material regarding slang on the YouTube platform.

1.6. 2 Practical Significance

1. Student

     This research can significantly expand students' knowledge and understanding of slang words, offering them more profound insights into their usage and significance. Furthermore, it can serve as a crucial reference for their future

academic studies, providing a solid foundation for further exploration and research in the field.

2. Teacher

Research on slang words significantly benefits prospective teachers by deepening their understanding of the language variations students and teachers use. Sometimes, the language students use in communication includes slang terms, whether in Indonesian or English. This research helps prospective teachers explain the differences between formal and informal language and manage the use of slang in classroom interactions. With a better understanding of slang, prospective teachers can create a more inclusive learning environment and effectively support students' language development.

3. Public

This research can enrich public or reader knowledge about slang words because language naturally experiences various variations. Sometimes, people are unaware that the language they use daily can be classified as slang.