

THE USE OF SLANG AMONG STUDENTS IN
SELECTED MALAYSIAN PUNJABI EDUCATION
CENTRES

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FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
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KUALA LUMPUR

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MALAYSIAN PUNJABI EDUCATION CENTRES**

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THE USE OF SLANG AMONG STUDENTS IN SELECTED MALAYSIAN PUNJABI EDUCATION CENTRES

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the usage of slang words among the Punjabi speaking students at three Punjabi Education Centres in Malaysia. The aims include to classify the slang words used by 100 Punjabi students at the Punjabi Education Centres and analyse the functions of the identified slang words. The data was analyzed, using a mixed-method mode with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The research instruments used were observations and questionnaires. The data was then analyzed using the criteria framework by Dumas and Lighter in Wong and Parco (2006), and another framework by Zhou and Fan (2013). It was concluded through the findings that the participants use slang words for the benefit of cuss words (37%), secret code (19%), tease (19%), hyperbole (7%), nickname (6%), politeness (4%), metaphor (4%), expressing feelings (2%) and sarcasm (2%). The Punjabi slang words with Emotive Feeling function are the most in this study by 52% as compared to the other two functions, which are Pursuit of Self-identity and Achieving Politeness; which fared at 13% and 3% respectively. Based on Zhou and Fan's (2013) framework, it can be concluded that the Punjabi language users are keen on expressing their attitudes, emotions and feelings onto their listeners, rather than being in the pursuit of finding themselves or behaving politely.

Keywords: functions of slang, Malaysian youth, Punjabi language, slang words, sociolinguistics.

PENGGUNAAN SLAGA DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR DI PUSAT PENDIDIKAN PUNJABI MALAYSIA TERPILIH

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini meneliti penggunaan perkataan slanga dalam kalangan pelajar berbahasa Punjabi di tiga Pusat Pendidikan Punjabi di Malaysia. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengklasifikasikan perkataan slanga yang digunakan oleh 100 orang pelajar Punjabi di Pusat Pendidikan Punjabi dan menganalisis fungsi perkataan slanga yang telah dikenal pasti. Data yang dikumpulkan dianalisis menggunakan kaedah campuran pendekatan kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah pemerhatian dan soal selidik. Kerangka Dumas dan Lighter yang dipetik dari Wong dan Parco (2006) dan kerangka yang dikenalkan oleh Zhou dan Fan (2013) digunakan untuk menganalisis data. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa slanga paling banyak digunakan ialah slanga mengumpat (37%) diikuti dengan slanga kod rahsia (19%), mengusik (19%), hiperbola (7%), nama panggilan (6%), kesopanan (4%), kiasan (4%), meluahkan perasaan (2%) dan sarkasme (2%). Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan slanga bahasa Punjabi dengan fungsi perasaan emotif (*Emotive Feeling*) adalah yang paling banyak dalam kajian ini (52%) berbanding fungsi mengejar identiti diri (*Pursuit of Self-Identity*) (13%) dan mencapai kesopanan (*Achieving Politeness*) (3%). Berdasarkan kerangka Zhou dan Fan (2013), dapat disimpulkan bahawa pelajar Punjabi lebih suka untuk menyatakan sikap, emosi dan perasaan mereka berbanding mencari identiti diri atau bersikap sopan.

Kata kunci: bahasa Punjabi, belia Malaysia, fungsi slanga, slanga, sosiolinguistik

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	PAGE	
PREFACE		
Declaration of work	ii	
Abstract	iii	
Abstrak	iv	
Acknowledgement	v	
Table of Contents	vi	
List of Appendices	x	
List of Figures	xi	
List of Tables	xii	
CHAPTER 1:	INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Introduction		1
1.1 Background of Study		1
1.1.2 The Arrival of Sikhs in Malaysia		1
1.1.3 Punjabi Language Teaching in Malaysia		3
1.1.4 Punjabi Education Centres in Malaysia		3
1.1.5 Khalsa Diwan Malaysia		4
1.1.5.1 The Role of Khalsa Diwan Malaysia		5
1.2 Statement of Problem		6

1.3 Aim of the Study	6
1.4 Research Questions	7
1.5 Significance of the Study	7
1.6 Limitation of the Study	7
1.7 Outline of the Study	8
1.8 Chapter Summary	9
CHAPTER 2:	LITERATURE REVIEW
	10
2.0 Introduction	10
2.1 Sociolinguistics	10
2.2 Slang	11
2.2.1 History of Slang	11
2.2.2 Definition of Slang	13
2.2.3 Characteristics of Slang	15
2.2.4 Types of Slang	17
2.2.5 Word Formation of Slang	18
2.2.6 Functions of Slang Words	19
2.2.7 Factors Influencing the Usage of Slang	22
2.3 Studies Related to Slang	24
2.4 Chapter Summary	26

CHAPTER THREE:	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	27
3.0 Introduction		27
3.1 Research Design		27
3.2 Research Site for Study		28
3.3 Research Sample		30
3.4 Research Instruments		31
3.4.1 Non-Participant Observation		31
3.4.2 Questionnaire		31
3.5 Data Collection Procedure		33
3.6 Data Analysis		35
3.6.1 Theoretical Frameworks		35
3.6.2 Demographic Information of the Participants		36
3.6.3 Conceptual Framework		40
3.7 Chapter Summary		42
CHAPTER FOUR:	FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS	43
4.0 Introduction		43
4.1 Primary and Secondary school students		43
4.2 Gender		44
4.3 Locale : Urban and Sub-Urban setting		45

4.4 Languages Used by the Participants	46
4.5 Research Question 1: Classifications of Slang Words	50
4.5.1 Criteria I & II	52
4.5.2 Criteria I & III	56
4.5.3 Criteria I & IV	61
4.5.4 Criteria II & III	63
4.5.5 Criteria II & IV	65
4.5.6 Criteria III & IV	67
4.5.7 Repeating Slang Words	68
4.6 Research Question 2: Functions of Slang Words	69
4.6.1 Equivalence to Zhou and Fan's Framework	85
4.7 Chapter Summary	88
CHAPTER FIVE:	CONCLUSION
	89
5.0 Introduction	89
5.1 Summary of Research Question 1	89
5.2 Summary of Research Question 2	91
5.3 Implication of Study	92
5.4 Recommendation for Future Research	94
References	95

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A1:	Questionnaire	107
Appendix A2:	Words Gathered from Different Languages from All Three Punjabi Education Centres	108
Appendix A3:	Punjabi Slang Words from All the Centres	113
Appendix A4:	Classifications of Functions of Punjabi Slang Words	121

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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1:	Organisational Chart of Punjabi Language Teaching in Malaysia	5
Figure 3.1:	The 4 Phases of Data Collection Procedure	33
Figure 3.2:	Number of Participants at the Three PEC Centres	37
Figure 3.3:	Comparison of age groups among the three centres	38
Figure 3.4:	Comparison of Gender among the Three Centres	39
Figure 3.5:	Number of Students who Speaks Punjabi Language at the Three Centres	40
Figure 3.6:	Conceptual Framework of the Study	41
Figure 4.1:	The Usage of Punjabi Slang Words among Primary and Secondary School students at the three Punjabi Education Centres	44
Figure 4.2:	Gender Representation of the Participants	45
Figure 4.3:	Collection of Slang Words from the Participants Residing in the Suburban and Urban Areas	46

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1:	The History of Slang	12
Table 3.1:	A Summary of Research Plan	29
Table 3.2:	Breakdown of the number of students at the three Punjabi Education Centres	30
Table 4.1:	Data on the Slang Words Derived from Different Languages	47
Table 4.2:	Classification Criteria of the Collected Slang Words	52
Table 4.3:	Slang words that fit the criteria of I & II	53
Table 4.4:	Slang words that fit the criteria of I & III	58
Table 4.5:	Slang words that fit the criteria of I & IV	62
Table 4.6:	Slang words that fit the criteria of II & III	64
Table 4.7:	Slang words that fit the criteria of II & IV	66
Table 4.8:	Slang words that fit the criteria of III & IV	67
Table 4.9:	Frequency of reoccurrence of slang words	68
Table 4.10:	68 Punjabi slang words from the three Punjabi Education Centres	70
Table 4.11:	Functions of slang words used by the participants	77
Table 4.12:	Equivalence of Zhou and Fan's (2013) Framework of Functions of Slang with the Functions of Slang Words from the Current Study.	85

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Slang has always been a topic in sociolinguistics that has been deserted and abandoned due its fame among peculiar groups of people (Eble, 1998). Not only that, slang is conventionally thought as a language that is uncouth and ill-mannered in a society. It is tagged as off limits, especially in the world of languages being used for formal situations. However, slang has been shaped and reshaped by different cultures (Izmaylova, Zamaletdinova & Alekseevna, 2017). The current study focuses on the interference of slang in the Punjabi language. This chapter gives a brief overview of the development of the Punjabi language in Malaysia, and also includes the statement of the problem of the current research, aims, the research objectives, the research questions and the significance of the current study.

1.1 Background of Study

The background of the current study looks into the arrival of Sikhs in Malaysia. The elaboration then continues to the evolution of the Punjabi language teaching, in the midst of growth with other languages, in the country. The elaboration continues with the upsurge of Punjabi Education Centres in Malaysia and the growing of Khalsa Diwan Malaysia.

1.1.2 The Arrival of Sikhs in Malaysia

The migration history of the Punjab Sikh to Malaya started in the 1880s, under the British ruling. The Sikh from India migrated due to a few factors. Job opportunities in Malaya was one of the key factors. According to Ramli and Kaur in Daima (2017), the Sikh in India made the move due to problems in the country related to overpopulated

citizens, insufficient land to accommodate the people and natural disasters. The initial migration of the Sikh community to Malaya was also led by the imprisonment of two political prisoners named Bhai Maharaj Singh and his follower, Karak Singh around July of 1850 in Penang (Daima, 2017). The second phase of migration began when the British hired the Sikh as safety police in the early 1870s (Azrul, 2012). The Sikh were chosen as security personnel as a defence force because of their strong physical appearances, such as their long beards and the turbans (Daima, 2017) as well as their well-built physique.

The next batch of the Sikh police was brought over by the British government in the 1880s for duties in Jebebu and Sungai Ujong. In the early months of 1877, the Perak Armed Police (PAP) was established in Taiping, Perak. By the end of the year, there were not less than 300 Sikh police in the PAP. Thus, the Sikh community began migrating to Perak (Daima, 2017). On the 15th of May, 1884, the armed police troops in Perak, which consisted of a great number of Sikhs, changed its name to First Battalion Perak Sikhs (FBPS). These Sikhs were renowned for being able to fight crime and offer defence assistance by providing help anywhere around Malaya (Daima, 2017). The Sikh community established its base at the police barracks and area surrounding the tin mines. The earliest Gurdwaras in Malaya at that time were built nearby the police barracks such as Gurdwaras in Selangor, Klang, and the High Street Police Headquarters (Daima, 2017). Gurdwara is the name given to a prayer house for Sikhs. Precisely, it refers to a room reserved for teachers because of the word “Gurdwara” itself, which means a teacher’s room (Daima, 2017).

The Sikhs continued migrating to Malaya after the end of the First World War. Most of them worked as security troops, police, moneylenders, cattle breeders and etc. When their contracts expired, the batch of Sikhs-who worked as the security troops were given choices to either return to their homeland in Punjab or find another job in a different

country. However, according to Manickam in Daima, (2017), most of them decided to just stay in Tanah Melayu and consequently, their population kept increasing since then. The Sikhs were based in villages around Perak, mainly in Taiping and Ipoh. In fact, Ipoh became the development center of the Sikh community around Malaysia, through the oldest Sikh organization named Khalsa Diwan (Daima, 2017). The Khalsa Diwan Malaya was formed in the year of 1903.

1.1.3 Punjabi Language Teaching in Malaysia

The Malaysian constitution encourages the learning and teaching of vernacular languages. But it comes with boundaries. For instance, the government has requirements such as having 15 students in one standard or form if any language is to be taught in school, according to Khalsa Diwan Malaysia. The Chinese and Tamil language are taught in schools as Pupils Own Language (P.O.L.). Due to the insufficient number of Punjabi students, the government refuses to place a teacher in every school for the Punjabi language. This has caused the Punjabi language proficiency to decline as the Punjabi population belongs in the minority. The only provision the community has-benefitted from the government is the preparation and allocation of PMR and SPM papers for the Punjabi language (Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, n.d.)

1.1.4 Punjabi Education Centres in Malaysia

The era of teaching a new language, the Punjabi language, in Malaysia began in the second half of the 19th century, when native Punjabi speakers were brought into the country by the British monarchy. According to Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, due to the fact that schools were either in the English or Malay medium at that time, the migrant races such as the Chinese, Tamils and Punjabis had to make extra effort to arrange their own language classes. Punjabis in Malaysia organized these classes in Gurdwaras since it was

a meeting point for all the devotees. The classes focused more on reading and writing as the most important objective was to recite Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji; the holy book (Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, n.d.).

In the early 1900s, the Malaysian government began setting up vernacular languages in primary schools and at the same time, formal Punjabi educational classes began too. The students were given six years of education in their native language before they could transfer to secondary schools. In 1960s, there were 14 primary schools and around 60 to 70 private schools for the Punjabi language. 200 Sijil Rendah Pelajaran (SRP) pupils and 47 Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) pupils attempted the Punjabi language paper for the SRP (now known as Penilaian Menengah Rendah, PMR) and SPM examinations respectively (Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, n.d.).

The 1970s and 1980s witnessed a major drop in the teaching and learning of the Punjabi language. A few reasons were the government's educational policy, a lack of trained educators and books as well as the decline in our country's economy. After the year 1980, the number of students taking the Punjabi language paper in the SRP and SPM examinations deteriorated. According to Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, by the 1990s, only 20% of the community was able to read, write and even converse in the language, while 40% spoke the language and the remaining 40% could not-speak, read nor write in the language. The Ministry of Education then decided to not prepare examinations for Punjabi language for three consecutive years (1993, 1994 and 1995). Upon appeal from some organizations, however, the ministry resumed the Punjabi examination in 1996 and it is still ongoing (Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, n.d.).

1.1.5 Khalsa Diwan Malaysia

Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, a Sikh organization founded in 1903, was initially aimed at managing social, academic, cultural and religious needs of the Sikh community.

(Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, n.d.). Slowly, the Khalsa Diwan Malaysia association was inactive. However, the committee did not lose sight of their vision and mission. The deterioration of Punjabi language in Malaysia was a serious issue to be dealt with. Hence, in the year 2000, the organization held a gathering at which the committee discussed various methods and ways to build a network to spread the teaching and learning of the language among the youth throughout the country. The gathering witnessed a launch of the structure of teaching and learning the Punjabi language all over the states (Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, n.d.). The structure is demonstrated in Figure 1.1.

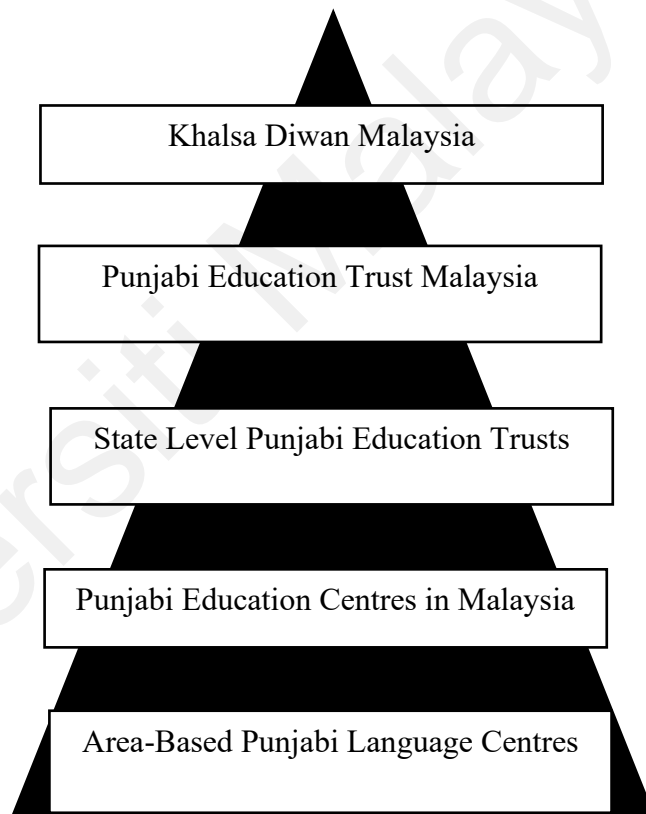


Figure 1.1 Organisational Chart of Punjabi Language Teaching in Malaysia

1.1.5.1 The Role of Khalsa Diwan Malaysia

Khalsa Diwan Malaysia was the organization responsible for setting up administrative centres, establishing operations in various state levels and also running the centres nationwide. It is a great deal of responsibility on the shoulders of Khalsa Diwan

Malaysia, as the organization not only deals with every single thing associated with the Punjabi Education Centres, in addition, they deal with the printing, publishing, and selection of appropriate textbooks for the Punjabi language classes, including the syllabus for national Punjabi language papers (Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, n.d.)

1.2 Statement of Problem

A study conducted by David et. al. (2003) on the language use among Punjabis in Petaling Jaya, proved that there is a shift away from the Punjabi language as younger participants used a mixture of English, Malay and Punjabi languages. The youth are consistently drawing lexical inspiration from different speech communities in contact, typically in a multicultural country like Malaysia, just so that they can keep their language and subculture dynamic and up-to-date (Hoogervorst, 2015). Namvar and Ibrahim (2014) acknowledged that slang is gaining popularity and familiarity, especially among the Malaysian youth. Slang occurs in all languages around the world (Namvar & Ibrahim, 2014) but if it is not checked properly, it may erode the standard languages (Ochonogor et al., 2012). However, research up to date is inconclusive about the impact of slang on the Punjabi language in Malaysia. Slang studies have received little linguistic attention and it has fallen behind since it is not an integral part of sociolinguistics (Kulkarni & Wang, 2017). The current study addresses the gap to further investigate the phenomenon of slang on the Punjabi language in Malaysia among the younger learners of the Punjabi language.

1.3 Aim of the Study

The study was conducted to achieve two objectives. The first objective of this study is to classify the slang words used by Punjabi students in Malaysian Punjabi Education Centres.

The second objective of this study is to analyse the function of the identified slang words.

1.4 Research Questions

The current research endeavours to answer the following two (2) research questions:

1. What are the slang words used by the Punjabi students in the Malaysian Punjabi Education Centres?
2. How do the identified words function as slang words in the Punjabi language?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study was conducted because studies on the usage of slang among Malaysian Punjabi youth are rare. There are only a handful of research studies on the Punjabi language. As highlighted by Humayoun and Ranta (2010), the Punjabi language falls under the category of an under resourced language. This adds up to more reasons why this research should be carried out among the youth of Malaysian Punjabi descent in Malaysia. The present research provides an invaluable opportunity to advance understanding on slang words used among the local minority Punjabi community. Findings from this study would make a crucial contribution towards comprehending the phenomenon of slang in the development of the field of linguistics especially pertaining to Malaysian Punjabi youth. This study would be useful to linguists who are investigating the usage of slang among youth. This investigation will help future researchers to gain fresh insights into the usage of slang among Punjabi youth in Malaysia.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

This study is an early observation on the usage of slang among the Malaysian Punjabi Sikh youth. Hence, it is limited to slang used by the youth in the age range of 9 to 17 years old. Another constraint of this study is the inability to generalize the findings.

The data that was collected and analysed through this study was limited as the sample of the study was small. Nevertheless, it may be useful to other studies related to slang used among the speakers of Punjabi language in Malaysia.

Also, the lifetime of a majority of slang phrases are short in nature as quoted by Greenough and Kittredge (1962), Partridge (1970), Algeo (1980), Drake (1980), Sornig (1981), Lighter (1994), Eble (1996), Thorne (1997), Adams (2003), and Peng and Sun (2003). Hence, the slang phrases may only be categorized as youth slang from the period between 2019 till 2020, in the younger Punjabi community in Malaysia.

Further, language variation covers many forms that could be discussed (Muhartoyo & Wijaya, 2014). However, this study is unable to encompass the entire scope of slang. It only focuses on the slang words used by Punjabi speaking students at selected Malaysian Punjabi Education Centres, ranging from primary to secondary school; and only examines its functions.

There are a limited number of references on researches—concerning the Punjabi slang words. The studies on Punjabi language focused more on other areas rather than slang. So, that has been another drawback for this study.

1.7 Outline of the study

There are five (5) chapters in this study. Chapter one introduced the aims, significance, limitations and the research questions important to the study. Chapter two discusses on previous related ideas and works conducted in the field of slang studies and sociolinguistics. Chapter three provides the methodology and the theoretical framework adopted for the identification of functions of the slang words, for the study. Chapter four analyses the collected data and presents a lengthy discussion of the findings. The last chapter, Chapter 5, provides a brief summary of the findings, the implications and also, recommendations for further research.

1.8 Chapter Summary

Chapter one has presented a general outline of the research area of the study. The chapter has also helped to shed some light onto the research objectives and the research questions of the study. The next chapter, Chapter two, discusses the pertinent works and areas related to the current study.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter covers previous related studies and relevant ideas on the area of slang usage among teenagers and college students as well as the importance of sociolinguistics for this study. This is followed by a brief history chronicling the origins of slang. Then, the chapter discusses the definition of slang. The next part encompasses the attributes of slang. The subsequent sections focus on the identification of various types of slang. This is followed by how slang words are formed and what their functions are. Finally, factors which influencing the usage of slang are examined. The following topics will outline a discussion on several studies related to this topic.

2.1 Sociolinguistics

The field of sociolinguistics studies investigates the relationship between language and society. It explores the use of language in different social contexts (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). The social factors such as social distance, age, class, gender, and social status affect language variations. In every community, there are various codes available for different social contexts. Similarly, in Malaysia, a female's linguistic repertoire might comprise of two varieties of English, two dialects of the Tamil language and various styles within, as well as the standard national language, Bahasa Melayu. One's ability to converse well from this wide linguistic repertoire depends solely on one's capacity to choose the most suitable variety (Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

Chaika (1994) puts forth his notion that sociolinguistics is the branch of study of how people converse using language which encompasses apparently trivial matters as it is focuses on the seemingly unimportant things such as social interactions in a variety of settings. On the other hand, Hymes (2001) relates sociolinguistics to the social identity

of speaker and listener, synchronous and diachronous analysis, language variation and the social context of verbal incidences. Further, relating to slang and sociolinguistics, the researcher agrees with Suhardianto and Ambalegin's (2017) assertion that the phenomenon of slang can only be understood if one grasps the concept of sociolinguistics, which relates to the language users in a society.

In the next section, scrutinising the background, definitions and characteristics of slang will prove insightful for the purposes of this research.

2.2 Slang

Slang is easy to be spotted but difficult to be defined (Seprina & Anwar, 2018). The following sections will elaborate on slang in terms of history, definitions, types, characteristics, word formations, functions and factors influencing the usage. The study further elaborates on the studies in relation to slang.

2.2.1 History of Slang

The concept of slang has been popularized since the sixteenth century (Allan et. al., 2006). The term has been widely used for a few functions, such as converting vulgar statements used by offenders, making jokes, keeping secrets and also, expressing ideas in other language variations than Standard English.

Initially, the term "slang" signified the speech used by the criminals from the lower levels of the society. The term underwent an evolution and it is being used regularly by the Americans, these days (Allan et. al., 2006). Even so, the majority of people consider slang as unsuitable for formal use. According to the Random House Historical Dictionary of American Slang and "Slang Today and Yesterday" (Partridge, 1945), the term has evolved from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. In the sixteenth century, the term "cant" was a slang term used by felons. This word came from Romania and it

was closely related to France. During that period, the people did not assume that slang was associated with criminal language as the words were easily used and understood by everyone (Claire, 1990).

Slang advanced rapidly throughout the decades. What initially began with criminals today, is being used by the youth who advocate fresh and diverse vocabulary. In fact, Willis in Awasilah (1985) mentioned that slang is the product of linguistical creativity, among the high-spirited youth who crave for new words to rename their fresh ideas and trends. Table 2.1 shows the evolution of slang, in terms of decades, characteristics, meaning and examples, from the sixteenth century to the twentieth century.

Table 2.1 The History of Slang

No.	Decades	Characteristics of slang	Examples	Meaning of the slang words
1	16 th century	Slang is used for a specific group of people such as criminals and crooks.	Particos, Priggers	Stroll, Thieves
2	17 th century	Slang is figurative and relates to dishonesty.	Clap, Buzzard	Clatter, A card game
3	18 th century	Slang is used in a comical way.	Melt	To spend

4	19 th century	Slang grew extensively and is used for conversational purposes.	Bus, Burra	A public carriage, A prodigious man
5	20 th century	Slang is a part of language; used by common people.	Big mouth, Guys	Talk incessantly, Friend

2.2.2. Definition of Slang

Slang is one of the variations that occur in a language. Linguists define slang in a myriad of ways. Dictionary definitions are also important to be examined, in order to understand the current study.

Michael Adams (2003) gives the definition of slang from the Encarta World English Dictionary as informal speech or writing words, terms, and uses that are casual, intense, lewd, or a frisky replacement for standard ones, which are often short-spanded, and inappropriate for formal settings. Slang is also considered as the language of a selected group, which has been created intentionally to exclude people from joining the group. The American Heritage College Dictionary, 4th edition, looks at slang as a type of language that occurs in casual and lively environments, and is made up of short-termed coinages. These words are consciously used to replace the standardized terms for the purpose of humour or mockery. Whereas the New Oxford American Dictionary, 2nd edition states that slang is more common in speech than it is in writing. It is limited to a specific set of people with a specific context. Maitland (2010), in the American Slang

Dictionary, mentioned that slang is used in a concealed manner but it is used by people on a daily basis.

Another viewpoint (Shahraki & Rasekh, 2011) highlighted that slang is an informal version of the standardized English language and it has undergone adaptation and extension in terms of semantics. It doesn't only contain the existing vocabulary, it makes up new words too; similar to the current study. Slang words act as a front for excitement and humor. Shahraki and Rasekh (2011) also maintained that slang is exclusive as it constantly changes like fashion styles, and people (whether they be teenagers and criminals) adapt to the trends by using the slang words extensively. This statement was proven to be accurate with the findings of the current study. However, the trend is considered unacceptable in circumstances outside of their inner circle, if it is perceived as unfavourable to their community. Maior (2019) agreed that most of the slang words are deemed to be out of fashion or conformity, especially when the humour, mockery, or irony component fades away and new synonyms supersede them. Incidentally, the transformation of a word into a slang word is closely related to the serendipitous popularity of the blue jeans (Maior, 2019). Blue jeans were created in the United States, in the mid-nineteenth century, for the purpose of providing sturdy work material for labourers, but the teenagers of wealthy American families started wearing them to speak out against their parents' expensive lifestyles (Maior, 2019). However, the material was popularized by Levi's and it turned into designer clothing, and consequently lost its 'rebellious' identity, in the process (Maior, 2019). As evident today, blue jeans are found everywhere, being used irrespective of one's status or age.

Next, Mulyana in Kuraedah and Azaliah (2016) described slang as words with distinct meaning; they may allude to words that are exclusive, inaccurate and even in conflict with common sense when they are used by people within a particular subculture. Kao in Sultana and Masood (2017) also associated the presence of slang with people from

similar ethnic backgrounds, gender, age, social and political proclivity and interest, whereas Eble in Kulkarni and Wang (2017) defined slang as the selection of vocabulary used by youth, worldwide as it mirrors their pursuit in music, art, fashion, and leisure time. The current study agrees with the notion that people from similar background understand most of the slang words as a number of slang words were found used amongst the students from all three Punjabi Education Centres. A particular type of slang they identified is teenage slang, which is used by a generation-specific group to create an identity distinct from the real world (Rullu, 2017). David in Mustafa (2015) revealed that English-speaking Malaysian teenagers create a new lingo for their group identity and also, it acts as a secret language, which proved to be true as the current study concludes. Claire in Rullu, (2017) clarified that slang terms are used to express emotions and the creativity of the person using the terms. Rullu., (2017) claimed that slang words are used to strengthen the identity of the group and link it with a trend or style at present. The current study indicated that a group of participants used slang words to strengthen the identity of their group by providing nicknames for certain individuals. However, the teenage slang exists for a shorter period of time as teenagers turn into adults. The usage of slang words lessens as they turn into old terms with outdated semantics (Rullu, 2017).

2.2.3 Characteristics of Slang

Mattiello (2008) emphasised the importance and the occurrence of sociological traits of slang phrases. The traits differ in some linguists' point of view. He expounded that the slang words can be categorized using four characteristics of the speaker. The four characteristics of the speaker of slang phrases are as follows (Mattiello 2008):

- i. an associate of a particular group, specifically concerning the confidentiality, culture, privacy and tatus.

- ii. a person with a concrete occupation or activity, depending on the technicalities of the group.
- iii. an individual from a lower status, who uses vulgar and obscene language.
- iv. a person with a certain age or generation range from a particular location (localism).

Anderson and Trudgill in Rullu (2017) had some distinct criteria for slang phrases, as compared to other linguists. They believed that a slang phrase is considered true only if it fits the features such as those below:

- i. slang is a language that is used below the unbiased stylistic level.
- ii. slang does not involve swear words.
- iii. slang is not considered as a register.
- iv. slang is unique and creative.
- v. slang is used for spoken language.

However, according to the current research, the participants were found using slang words in casual environments, and these slang words involved harsh swear words, even though they were unique and creative.

Spolsky (2001) agreed with most of the linguists by affirming that slang rejects the societal norms and uses taboo expressions instead. Slang, according to Spolsky, is used as a tool to familiarize conversations, give new meaning to words and express solidarity among group members.

The current study utilized the framework proposed by Dumas and Lighter in Wong and Parco (2006), to identify the slang words from the words that were gathered from the participants.

In the subsequent section, the various types of slang are alluded to.

2.2.4 Types of Slang

Allan and Burrige in Rullu (2017) confirmed that slang can be identified in five types namely: fresh and creative, compounding, imitative, acronym, and clipping. Slang words are thought to be fresh and creative when they have new vocabulary and the words are trending. An example of this type of slang will be the word 'awesome'. The word signifies something great. As for compounding, it combines two words using its denotative meaning, such as the word 'bus stop'. The urban thesaurus refers to the term 'bus stopping as making out with a member of the opposite sex. Whereas an imitative slang word mimics the standardized language words, but with a different meaning. For example, the word 'want to' is portrayed as 'wanna'. Another type is acronym, which is made from the initials of the first letters from a word, such as AF (as fuck). Clipping, on the other hand, deals with the deletion of some parts of the word. The word becomes shorter in length but it carries the same meaning as its full form. For example, the word 'exam' comes from the word 'examination' or 'bro' for brother. The current study identifies with this particular study, as types of slang words found were fresh and creative, compounding, imitative, acronym, and clipping.

Abadi in Evadewi and Jufrizal (2018) classified slang into 4 types, such as creativity, flippant, fresh and onomatopoeic. Creativity represents the slang words created from the imagination, whereas flippant slang words are those that are considered irrelevant because of their gist. Fresh slang words are created from the existing words, while onomatopoeic slang words are created by imitating the sound of that particular word. The first type is creativity, which brings about new vocabularies to describe a casual situation, such as the word "mom" which is used to designate an elder woman who is related to the user (Allan & Burrige, 2006). In Eminem's song, *Bully*, the slang word

“50” was identified as a creative type of slang, as it has a new meaning to describe something which is inspired, pioneering and productive. As for the flippant type of slang, Eminem lyrics for the song, *I’m not afraid*, used the phrase “I don’t give a damn” which meant that someone doesn’t care about something. This slang is considered as flippant as it is a phrase with connotative meaning. The slang word “dough” from Eminem’s lyrics for the song, *Bully*, means “money”. Abadi (2009) mentioned that the slang expression is considered as fresh as it formed a new word; completely different from the original word. From Eminem’s song, *I’m not afraid*, the lyric “get back, click clack, pow”, is an onomatopoeic type of slang as the slang is imitating a sound of a pistol. The researcher found similarities between this study and the current study.

The next section will briefly discuss how slang words are formed.

2.2.5 Word Formation of Slang

McCarthy-Carstairs (2002) reiterated that “a word is a basic unit of language and word formation is a technique to develop new words”. Supporting that statement, Yule (2010) mentioned a similar definition for word formation processes. Yule (2010) also posited that there are 10 types of word formation processes, which are acronym, backformation, blending, borrowing, clipping, coinage, compounding, conversion, derivation and multiple processes.

Word formation processes are crucial for human being as we are always inventing new words. A new word may come from a current word, borrowed from other languages, or produced or coined by people around (Oktavia et al., 2017).

Slang words such as IMY (I miss you) and ILY (I love you), which are widely spread among the youth, use acronym from the word formation processes. These words invoke creativity among the youth. This is not only true of acronyms, but as long as

anyone is using the word formation processes to create a new slang word, it is considered as a variation (Oktavia et al., 2017).

Researchers have taken the initiative to conduct studies on slang language which directly relates to the word formation processes. The current research relates with these researches, as the slang words resembled the word formation processes. A number of researches have been conducted on song lyrics sung by well-known singers such as Nicki Minaj (Seprina et al., 2018), Far East Movement (Oktavia, 2017) and Eminem (Kuspiyah, 2016) and (Evadewi et al., 2018) to investigate the slang expressions in them.

Moving on from the processes involved in the formation of slang words, the next two sections explore their purpose and the factors that influence slang usage.

2.2.6 Functions of Slang Words

Slang words increase creativity standards among the youth as they invent a variety of slang words (Oktavia et al., 2017). However, it is important to understand the underlying meaning of a word as it may lead to misinterpretation and frustration in interaction. Although it is challenging to not offend others, miscommunications usually occur by subtle implications in the meanings of the uttered words (Myles and Lindholm, 2019). The same is especially true for slang utterances, even when they produce creative slang users.

British lexicographer, Partridge (1945), believes that people have fifteen reasons for using slang. The fifteen motivations are as follows:

- 1) just for fun
- 2) for pleasures
- 3) people want to be unique

- 4) to be attractive (especially by using songs and poems)
- 5) to escape the boring way of using languages and instead, be concise and precise
- 6) to develop the language by discovering new words
- 7) to make it clear that they are charming and interesting
- 8) to reduce the formality of any conversation
- 9) for children to amuse their parents
- 10) to show solidarity and belonging to a group
- 11) for proof that someone doesn't belong to the group
- 12) to be friendly
- 13) to appear secretive especially around others who are not supposed to understand their words
- 14) to break the barriers of social interactions
- 15) to prove that they are strong instead of rude.

All of these 15 functions are able to be concluded in the three functions described by Zhou and Fan (2013), as the current study summarizes.

Zhou and Fan's (2013) three social functions of the American Slang are:

- a) Pursuit of Self-Identity, where the background of social and professional groups influences the usage of terms within the group.
- b) Emotive Feeling which indicates the usage of slang for relieving the psychological need for one to express emotions freely.
- c) Attaining Politeness which contributes to saving face and upholding the relationship with others using composure and manners.

The pursuit of self-identity is often associated with the various social and professional groups having different slang. Hence, slang words are considered as codes that divide the professional groups in a community. The terms used by the members of each group signifies the mentality of the group. For example, if a student uses slang words

from college, it portrays that the particular student belongs to a group of teenagers (Zhou & Fan, 2013).

The emotive functions of the slang users identify with the speaker's behaviour towards his subject. It is one of the most influential uses of language, as it helps with accommodating to the audience one deals with. The emotive function is useful to unload the user's nervous energy when he/she is under stressful situations. Slang assists humans in expressing their strong feelings for group identification purposes, which explains the reason why people use profanity as it is considered as the subcategory of slang. Not only that, Zhou and Fan (2013) mentioned that slang alleviates our psychological burden and discharges us mentally. People tend to use slang to go against the current reality, in order to set themselves free, psychologically. That is a significant reason to why most people use slang, as slang helps to satisfy their psychological needs to express their emotions.

The third function, by Zhou and Fan (2013) is achieving politeness. Zhou and Fan indicates that politeness is related with the register. The choice of register changes according to three factors, namely the formality of the occasion, the addressee (in terms of age, the degree of acquaintance, occupation and gender), and the gist of the conversation. If there is a glitch in any of these three factors, it may directly affect the good friendship or relationship one has with others. Thus, it is important to use words effectively, especially in creating a conducive environment or sustaining social contacts. The phatic function, which relates to the language being used for general purposes rather than mere conveying of information, comes with the usage of slang words. Zhou and Fan further elaborated that slang alongside the phatic function maintains the user's positive face. Proper slang expressions, promotes friendly environments and it may help in achieving an affluent conversation. In a conclusion, slang plays an important role in maintaining a flow of communication between two parties or more, by establishing good relations in a non-intimidating environment.

The current study utilizes the framework by Zhou and Fan (2013) to identify the social functions of the slang words used by the participants.

2.2.7 Factors Influencing the Usage of Slang

Communication refers to an orderly process, whereby people interact with and through signs to make and infer meanings (Wood, 2004). It also involves transferring and getting information, which is used by people to generate the semantics using various settings, beliefs, channels and media (Rullu, 2017). Jakobson (1971) believed that communication happens between emitter and receiver. The emitter conveys the message to the receiver. The conveyed message has to have a comprehensible context by both parties and there must be an inner link between them to initiate and continue the communication.

Holmes (1992) agreed with the notion that the usage of slang may be affected by some social factors like the age, status, gender and many other considerations. Historically, slang is used to cater to various social classes and professions as well. It is also believed that slang has its own ways to be expressed more politely as to not give any offense, which is concurred by Brown and Levison (1978) as they mention the usage of slang being termed as positive politeness strategy. Hence, it can be inferred that the use of slang is directly related to politeness. Mahmud's (2013) theory also suggests a close relationship to politeness. Moreover, Mahmud (2013) believed that there are a few factors that influence the way we speak while communicating. One of it refers to social status. Social status portrays the high, low or equal position of an individual, especially with relation to the authority, social class and the prestige one holds. The usage of slang is appropriated with the people we are speaking to.

The next factor will be age. The age of the speaker and listener will be a factor contributing to the slang words that are used in the conversation. In Japan, the way the older and younger people speak are different. The younger ones tend to have a more polite approach (Rullu, 2017). The current research justifies that the participants use slang words with their counterparts as they are comfortable in doing so. Some of the participants mentioned that they use the term “phenji” (literal translation for sister) for their Punjabi school teacher as a sign of respect.

Another factor will be the gender of the people conversing. Stanley in Grossman et. al. (1997) has mentioned that conventionally, the usage of slang has always been dominated by men, due to existence of 220 lexes for a promiscuous woman as compared to the small number of expressions (22) used to designate the male counterpart. Men and women differ greatly in the sense of speaking politely, especially when it involves to the way the both genders talk, complain, nag, support and even cooperate with each other.

Next, the degree of familiarity may also affect the way we communicate as well. One’s identity is shaped by the shared practices, customs, and beliefs. The way one communicates depends on how intimate or accustomed one is with the other person. Equally, a more familiar person will speak less politely or more casually with one another, often using a familiar mode of language with impolite expressions (Mahmud, 2013).

The last factor is the situation one is in. In general, people tend to behave and converse politely in formal situations unlike informal situations as the speaker uses a less polite approach to his/her speech. The current study portrays the usage of slang words among students in casual-like situations, which confirms this statement. The speaker changes his/her speech style, with regards to the situation and this too can have an impact on the choice of slang words used.

2.3 Studies Related to Slang

There are some studies that were conducted previously that have shed insights in understanding the current study.

A research study was conducted by Pradianti (2013) entitled “The Use of Slang Words Among Junior High School Students in Everyday Conversation” to study the usage of slang words by ninth graders. Morphological processes involved in the slang words were also examined. The data was collected from interviews and questionnaires, which were further analysed using theories by Yule (1985), O’Grady and Guzman (1996), Gerber (1968) and Potter (1975). The study collected 144 slang words and identified eleven morphological processes. The study concluded that students used the slang words to show anger, to confuse others, to speak in an easy, relaxed manner, and to have joy and laughter in their daily conversations. It can be compared to Zhou and Fan’s (2013) work on the three functions of slang words, as used by the current study.

Suhardianto’s (2016) research on “Teenagers’ Language Use in Batam: Language Variation” was conducted with participants between the ages of 12 and 21. This study collected data using *Metode Simak* with *Teknik Sadap* and *Libat Cakap*, proposed by Sudaryanto (2015), which is an observation method used in researches. The study aimed at investigating the forms of language style and language variation used by teenagers. Suhardianto concluded that the teenagers used slang as a language variation to communicate in informal situations. The slang words were mostly used in cities like Surabaya, Jakarta and Bandung, to express their feelings through their utterances. This study highlighted the current study by confirming the usage of slang words of participants as young as the age of 12.

“Check This One Out: Analysing Slang Use among Iranian Male and Female Teenagers” was a research study by Shahraki and Rasekh (2011), to examine the relationship between age and gender on the inconsistent usage of slang. The participants

were chosen carefully from primary schools, secondary schools and universities, and were segregated into three categories by age group. The research was carried out using questionnaires with nine situations in the form of the Discourse Completion Test (DCT). The chi-square test from the study concluded that the usage of slang among secondary school students were higher compared to other groups. Also, the study reported that the young male and female Iranians used slang words in their daily lives, to prove their solidarity to the social group they belonged to. Similar to the current study, the usage of slang words is evident in both genders.

Muhammad (2016) conducted a study on the students from the University of Maiduguri, in Northern Nigeria. The research study was carried out to identify the slang expressions used by the students and to analyse the slang words using the referential theory by Ogden and Richards (1923). The theory hypothesizes the relationship between referent, symbol and reference. The research used questionnaires and observation as research instruments for 50 participants. The slang words were classified into themes such as monetary, educational, consumable, sexuality and salutation. The study highlighted that the participants used sexuality-related slang the most compared to the other themes. This finding confirmed the notion by Okpanachi (2000), who stated that youth are curious and therefore, motivated towards conversing explicitly about matters related to sexuality. Evidence proved that there were morphological processes involved in the formation of slang words.

Asiyah (2014) explored the transgender community, to find out the meaning, formation and functions of the slang words used by them, in a study entitled, "Transgender Community and Its Slang Words". The research employed the descriptive qualitative method, such as observation and interview. The findings revealed the usage of bilingual languages; Javanese and Indonesian languages, in the community. Asiyah drew particular attention to the main functions of using slang words in the community.

Slang words were used to hide the gist of the conversations as the public are often under the assumptions that transgenders are involved in prostitution. The members of the transgender community also used the slang words to differentiate themselves from the rest.

The studies presented thus far have provided significant evidences of many phenomena involving the use of slang among the youth. As for this study, the researcher has compared, contrasted and examined various researches. This study however will delve into sociolinguistics. The slang words and the functions of the slang words will be the main focus of this investigation.

Recent studies on slang and the functions of slang are inconclusive about the impact of slang on the Punjabi language in Malaysia, as slang studies have received little linguistic attention. Hence, the current study addresses the gap to further investigate the phenomenon of slang on the Punjabi language in Malaysia among the younger learners of the Punjabi language.

2.4 Chapter Summary

The current chapter has given an overview on the literature relevant to Sociolinguistics and Slang. The studies done by other researchers display a great potential for more researches to be done in the area of slang. Hence, the present study values the importance of developing a study in the field of slang, in relation to sociolinguistics. The following chapter further elaborates on the methodology and the theoretical framework used in the current study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

Slang has become one of the most prominent areas of research. Hence, in line with the current study on the usage of slang, this study focuses on investigating the presence of slang in the Punjabi language and the functions of the slang words. The current chapter outlines a comprehensive explanation on the methodological procedures used in this study. It comprises the research design, the research procedure, a summary outlining the data collection procedure, the data analysis, the theoretical frameworks and the demographic information of the participants. This research study was carried out using two methods: qualitative and quantitative.

3.1 Research Design

Creswell (2009) identifies the purpose of a qualitative research as discovering the meaning of the people's experiences, culture and their views on a particular matter, and the purpose for quantitative research is to investigate the connection between dependent, independent and extraneous variables. In quantitative research, the researcher collects many kinds of data to see the whole picture of what is going on in the area of focus, whereas qualitative research focuses more on people's words, through interviews, newspapers, and even observations (Elkatawneh, 2016). The current study adheres to a mixed-method mode of collecting data. The study uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches to answer the research questions. The current study adhered to observations and questionnaire, in order for the research to be considered as triangulated, which adds to the validity of the study (Creswell, 2009).

The methodology employed in the present study is a simple mixed mode research with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Initially the data was to be collected

through a non-participant observation. But as the research developed, the researcher had to adopt another approach, which was the questionnaire. The participants were not able to provide much data through the non-participant observations, hence the questionnaires were administered to carry on the study. The data from the questionnaire were sufficient to be documented in charts, tables and figures.

Upon the collection of the data, the data was classified into slang words, using the criteria provided by framework by Dumas and Lighter in Wong and Parco (2006), and then, further analysed for the functions of the data, using the framework by Zhou and Fan (2013).

3.2 Research Site for Study

The Punjabi Education Centres in Malaysia are run by Khalsa Diwan Malaysia. This organization supports the Gurdwaras and are currently occupied with many projects in backing the teaching and learning of the Punjabi language, as well as the advancement of religious programmes throughout the country. There are 38 Punjabi Education Centres across Malaysia, but only 30 are functioning at the moment. Initially, eight Punjabi Education Centres were contacted beforehand to obtain the approval of relevant authorities to carry out the research study. However, only three of them were willing to participate in the study. The three Punjabi Education Centres selected for this research were Petaling Jaya Punjabi Education Centre, Johor Bahru Punjabi Education Centre and Batu Pahat Punjabi Education Centre. The researcher was able to collect prominent data from these three Punjabi Education Centres. The summary of the action plan of the study is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 A Summary of Research Plan

No.	Location	Date	Summary of Activity
1.	Petaling Jaya Punjabi Education Centre	27 th of July 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-participant Observation
		3 rd of August 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-participant Observation• Questionnaire
2.	Johor Bahru Punjabi Education Centre	31 st of August 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-participant Observation
		7 th of September 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-participant Observation• Questionnaire
3.	Batu Pahat Punjabi Education Centre	14 th of September 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-participant Observation
		21 st of September 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-participant Observation• Questionnaire

3.3 Research Sample

The study involved students, varying from ages of nine to seventeen. The purpose of such a sample was to enable sufficient coverage of the usage of slang among the Malaysian Punjabi youngsters. Although the participants are from a younger range group, they were familiar with the use of slang words before they started completing the questionnaires, and they were able to provide valid data for the study. Also, the participants were given a short presentation on the examples of slang usage and the structure of the questionnaire before the questionnaires were administered to them. The participants asked questions throughout the presentation session as well. The total number of students recruited for this study from the three centres were a hundred.

Table 3.2 Breakdown of the number of students at the three Punjabi Education Centres

No.	Punjabi Education Centre	Number of secondary school students	Number of primary school students	Total number of students
1	Johor Bahru	23 (14 girls + 9 boys)	18 (13 girls + 5 boys)	41
2	Petaling Jaya	23 (8 girls + 15 boys)	24 (11 girls + 13 boys)	47
3	Batu Pahat	7 (4 girls + 3 boys)	5 (2 girls + 3 boys)	12
			Total	100

Table 3.2 shows the breakdown of the number of students at the three Punjabi Education Centres in Johor Bahru, Petaling Jaya and Batu Pahat respectively. Petaling Jaya Punjabi Education Centre recorded the highest number of participants, with 23 secondary students and 24 primary students, whereas at the Johor Bahru Punjabi Education Centre, the participants accounted for 23 secondary school students and 18

primary school students. Batu Pahat is a small town, hence the number of students in this centre was a handful, which are 7 secondary school students and 5 primary school students.

3.4 Research Instruments

The following sub-sections introduced the research procedure of the current study, which are non-participant observation and questionnaire.

3.4.1 Non-participant Observation

The non-participant observation is a research technique where the researcher observes the subjects of the study, with their permission, without any active participation. This technique was adhered to identify and collect the slang words used by the Malaysian Punjabi youth in the Punjabi Education Centres.

The researcher visited the three selected Punjabi Education Centres twice to observe the students. The students were visited once a week, for a period of 30 to 40 minutes per session. The participants were observed in their classrooms and the canteens belonging to the centres. Throughout the entire session, field notes were taken. Slang words used in the classrooms and the canteens were noted. However, due to the presence of the researcher, the participants were only using formal language in the classrooms. The amount of slang words was insufficient for the study, as there were only 23 words that were collected. Hence, a set of questionnaires was used to collect the data to achieve the aims of the study.

3.4.2 Questionnaire

The research instrument used for this study was a questionnaire that was adapted from a study by Perumal (2008). Perumal's (2008) study was conducted on the usage of

slang words among the Indian students in University Malaya. As compared to Perumal's (2008) research, the current study has different participants. The questionnaire had to be adapted in terms of demographic details and formatting. The current study was conducted in three different Punjabi Education Centres, as compared to Perumal's (2008) study, which was only conducted amongst the Indian students of University Malaya.

The questionnaire for this study comprised of two sections. In Section A, the participants were required to provide their personal details for the purpose of collecting demographic information. The personal details included their school names, gender, ability to speak Punjabi and their fluency in the Punjabi language. Section B involved basic questions on slang. The students were also asked if they knew what slang was. Section B helped the researcher understand the usage and meaning of the slang words, as stated in the second research question. (Refer to Appendix A1)

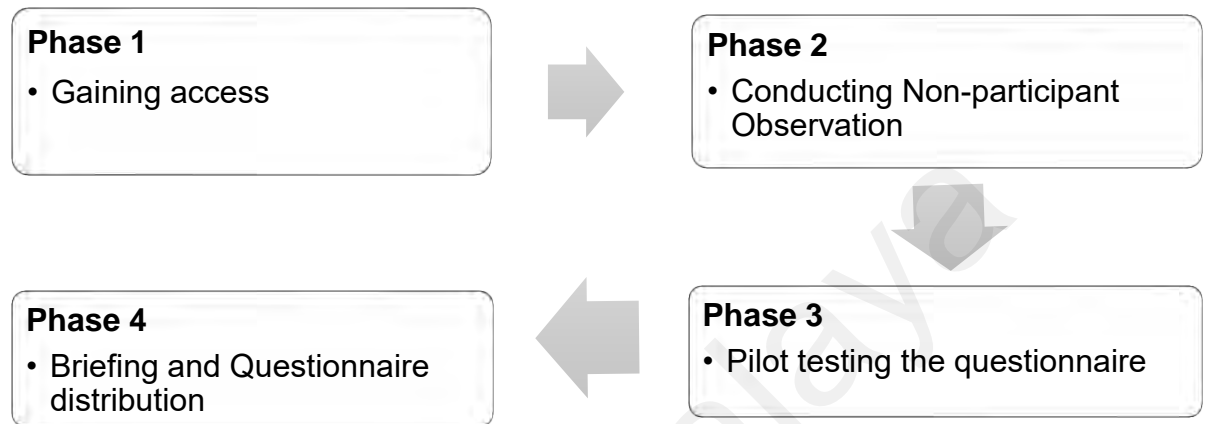
The questionnaire was given to two of the researcher's colleagues to proofread for clarity and coherence. Before the distribution of the questionnaire to the participants, a pilot study was carried out as a pre-test, for validity purposes. It was given to 5 random Punjabi students from each centre for any feedback such as unclear instructions. The feedback from the proposed participants was necessary to clarify and change any kind of uncertainty, so that the participants could comprehend the questions for readability.

The questionnaires were distributed to the participants after they were introduced to the concept of slang in a brief presentation for 10 minutes by the researcher. The participants were allowed to ask questions regarding the concept of slang if they were unclear. This was done because research has indicated that students are oftentimes confused with the use of slang and may require elaborations (Homuth & Piippo, 2011). Thus, it is important for the participants to understand the notion of slang before attempting the questionnaires.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

There are four phases in the data collection procedure. Figure 3.1 explains the phases.

Figure 3.1 The 4 Phases of Data Collection Procedure



Phase 1: Gaining Access

During phase 1, requesting permission from the authorities of Punjabi Education Centres was crucial. The centres are associated with the Gurdwaras. All the Gurdwaras are run by a group of individuals consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and other committee members. They are in charge of taking care of the Gurdwara's operations and outreach services. As for the Punjabi Education Centres, there is a principal who runs the centre and liaises with the President of the Gurdwara when there are any problems or issues to be dealt with. Therefore, at the beginning of the research, the researcher was required to seek permission from the relevant authorities of the Punjabi Education Centres in order to carry out the study. Since the telephone numbers and email addresses of each of the respective centres were provided online at the webpage of Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, the researcher wrote emails to the centres regarding the proposed study, and received replies from the principals. The researcher and the principal confirmed the date and time the centre would be available to accommodate the researcher to conduct the stu

Phase 2: Non-participant Observation

At the three centres, the participants were observed for their usage of slang words. Before the observations were conducted, the participants were informed about the purpose and process of the observation, which would be unobtrusive. The researcher observed the participants without participating in the conversations. The slang words used in the students' exchanges were duly noted.

Phase 3: Pilot testing the questionnaire

The questionnaires were passed on to two of the researcher's colleagues to read for clarity and coherence. On the day of the research, the researcher prepared and distributed the questionnaires randomly to 5 students, for pre-test purposes. This was done to ensure the proposed students were able to fill in the required information as accurately as possible, for readability. The pilot test helped to ensure the instructions were not misleading nor confusing.

Phase 4: Briefing and questionnaire distribution

The researcher asked for permission to gather the students in an allocated space for the briefing session. Before the questionnaires were distributed to the intended participants, a short presentation was conducted. The researcher started the session by explaining the structure of the questionnaire to the students. The students were also briefed about slang. They were also advised to ask any questions on slang before they started. The researcher needed to ensure that the students understood slang before they attempted the questionnaires. The students were given ample time (15 to 30 minutes) to complete the questionnaire. This measure was taken to ensure the students were calm and composed when they filled in the questionnaires. The researcher disseminated 120

questionnaires and received only 100 questionnaires from the following centres. The questionnaires were returned to the researcher after the students had completed them.

The details of the centres and the number of the questionnaires are as follows:

- a) Petaling Jaya PEC: 50 questionnaires given (47 were returned)
- b) Johor Bahru PEC: 50 questionnaires given (41 returned)
- c) Batu Pahat PEC: 20 questionnaires given (12 returned)

3.6 Data Analysis

The present study adapted a comprehensive plan to analyse the data. The following subsections explain the theoretical frameworks, the demographic information of the participants in terms of number of participants, age group, gender and the ability to speak the Punjabi language and also, the conceptual framework of the study.

3.6.1 Theoretical Frameworks

For the first research question, the slang words needed to be identified from the responses obtained from the participants. According to the framework by Dumas and Lighter in Wong and Parco (2006), there are four principles used to classify slang. For instance, a word is only considered as a slang word if it fits a minimum of two criterion.

The four principles are as follows:

- i) its occurrence will evidently lessen the reputation of official discourse or inscription
- ii) its usage denotes the user's understanding with the referent, who may be from a lower, more irresponsible class of individuals.
- iii) a taboo / vulgar word in a common spoken interaction with people from a higher social status or those with superior accountability.
- iv) it's articulated in a predictable yet familiar venue, especially aimed at:
 - defending the user from any uneasiness caused.

- shielding the user from any further exasperation.

As for the second research question, the identified Punjabi slang words were analysed to identify their functions. Zhou and Fan's (2013) framework proposed 3 social functions of the American Slang as follows:

1) The pursuit of self-identity

The slang users utilise a distinctive set of words to identify themselves differently from other groups. The users have their own identity through the words they utter in the group.

2) Emotive feeling of the slang users

This particular function exposes the user's attitude towards the subject. Profanity is often found in this type of function.

3) Achieving politeness

The function for politeness is affected by three factors; occasions (formal or informal), recipient (age, gender, occupation and the degree of acquaintance) and the gist of the conversation. When slang adheres to the phatic function, it helps to maintain the positive face.

3.6.2 Demographic Information of the Participants

The demographic data collected from the three centres were analysed and compared in terms of number of participants, age groups, gender and language fluency, as shown, in the Section A of the questionnaire. As for Section B, the analysis for the Punjabi slang words will be done in Chapter 4.

Section A: Personal Details

a) Number of participants

Figure 3.2 shows the number of participants at the three Punjabi Education Centres; Petaling Jaya Punjabi Education Centre, Batu Pahat Punjabi Education Centre and Johor Bahru Punjabi Education Centre.

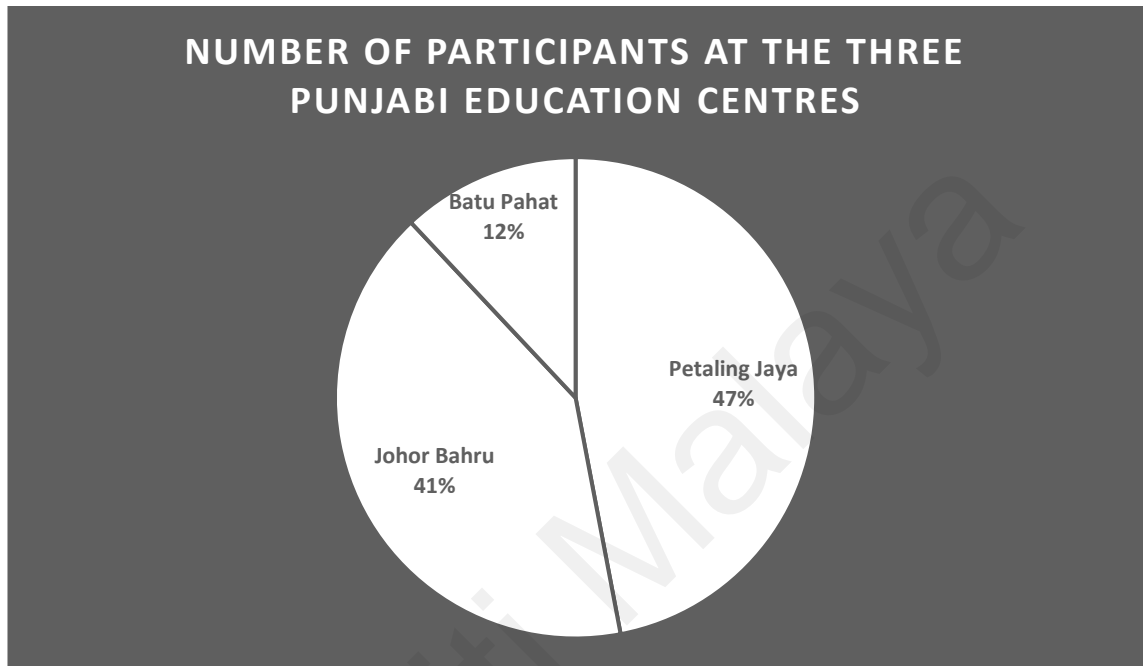


Figure 3.2 Number of Participants at the Three Punjabi Education Centres

As shown in Figure 3.2, the highest number of participants are from Petaling Jaya PEC with 47% (47 participants) followed by Johor Bahru PEC at 41% (41 participants) and lastly Batu Pahat PEC with only 12% (12 participants).

Petaling Jaya PEC had the highest number of students, up to 180 participants. But due to the construction that was ongoing at the opposite building, at the time of data collection, most students were absent. Apart from the noise pollution and construction disruption, the parents were reluctant to send their children to school because of the debris and dust from the construction site that may cause the students to fall ill.

As for Batu Pahat PEC, the participants were the least due to the fact the Punjabi community in Batu Pahat is small in number, given that it is a relatively small town in comparison to Petaling Jaya and Johor Bahru which are cities.

b) Age group

Figure 3.3 shows a comparison chart on the age groups found in all the three Punjabi Education Centres.

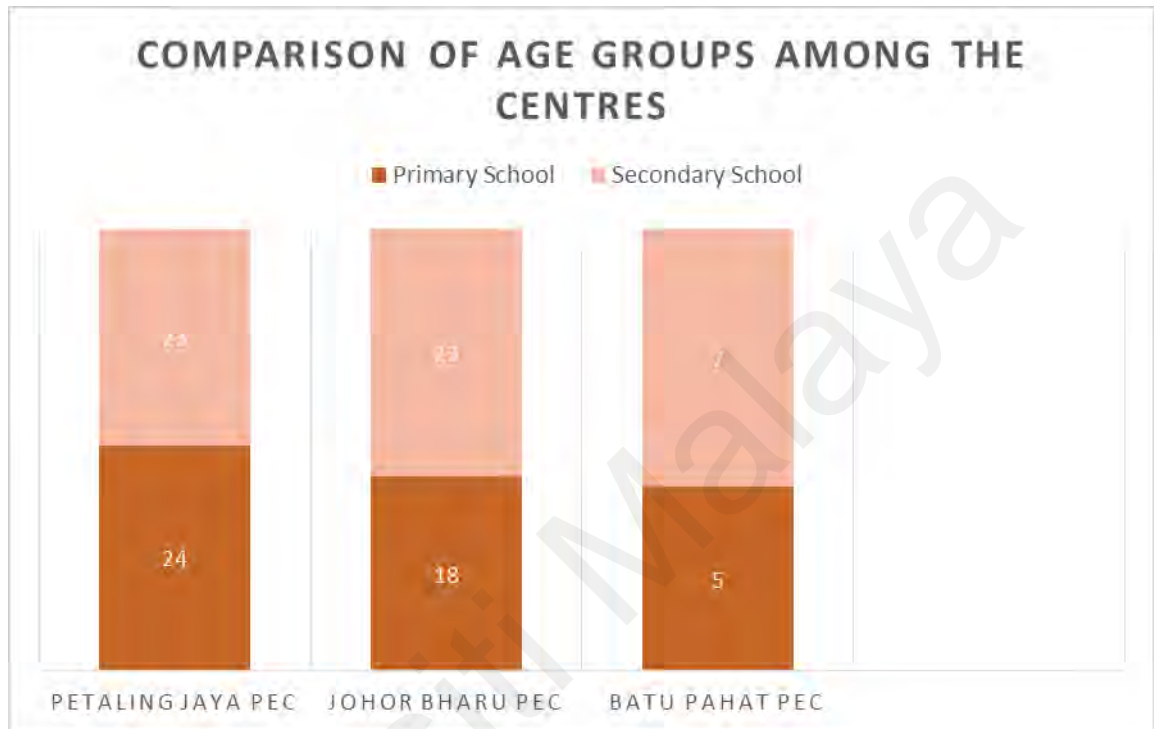


Figure 3.3 Comparison of Age Groups among the Three Centres

The questionnaires were distributed to participants from primary and secondary school to ensure an overall coverage of both age groups.

As seen from Figure 3.3, Petaling Jaya PEC had the highest number of primary school participants, which was 24 participants, as compared to Johor Bahru PEC, with 18 participants and Batu Pahat PEC with 5 participants.

In terms of secondary school participants, Petaling Jaya PEC and Johor Bahru PEC had the same number of participants, which was 23 participants, unlike Batu Pahat PEC which had only 7 secondary school participants.

c) Gender

Figure 3.4 displays a comparison of gender among all the three Punjabi Education Centres.

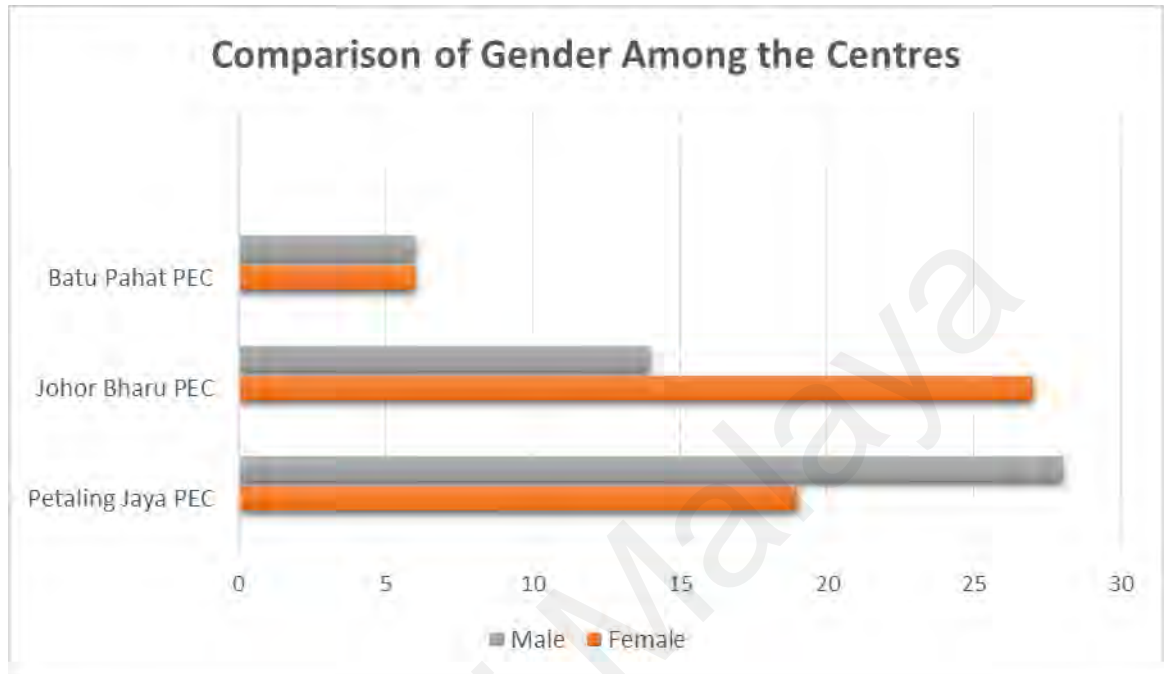


Figure 3.4 Comparison of Gender among the Three Centres

Figure 3.4 shows the population of females and males that answered the questionnaires at the three centres. At the Batu Pahat PEC, the participants consisted of 6 females and 6 males, whereas at the Petaling Jaya PEC, there were 19 females and 28 males, as compared to the Johor Bahru PEC, which had 27 females and 14 males.

There was an equal distribution of questionnaires among both genders at the Batu Pahat PEC, as compared to the Petaling Jaya PEC which had more males than females and Johor Bahru PEC which led with females

d) Speaking the Punjabi language

Figure 3.5 demonstrates the participants' speaking proficiency in the Punjabi language, at the three Punjabi Education Centres.

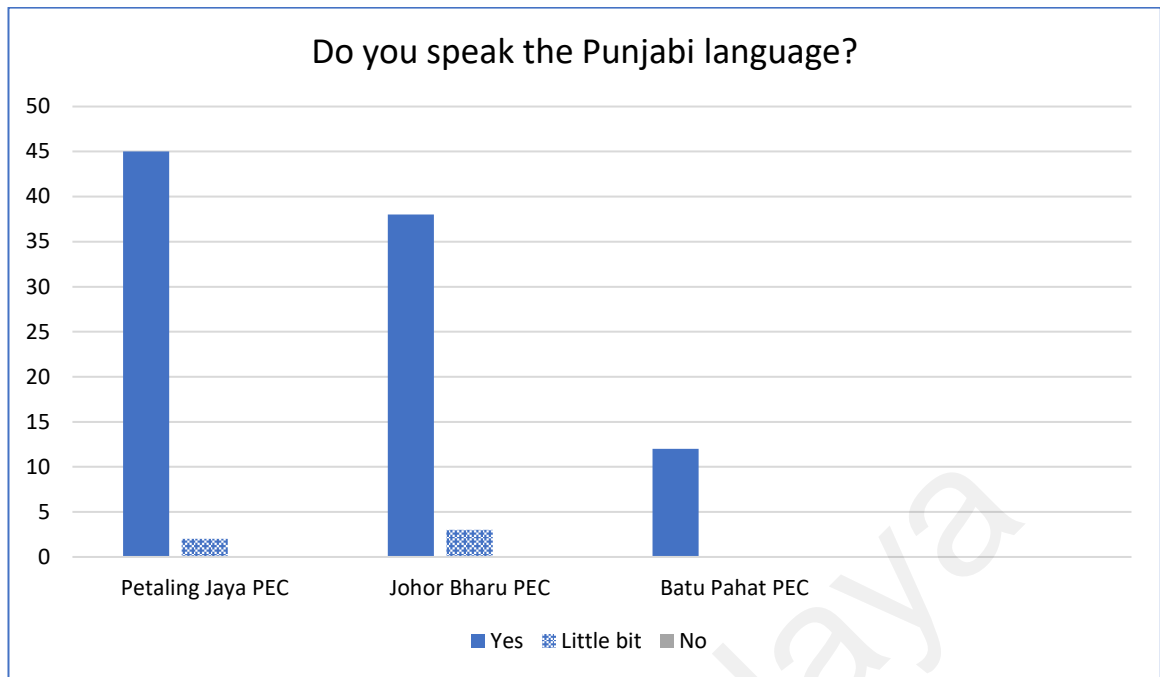


Figure 3.5 Number of Students who Speaks Punjabi Language at the Three Centres

This question is important to show the fluency of the participants, which is the requirement of the study. Majority of the students at all the centres are fluent in speaking the Punjabi language. At the Petaling Jaya PEC, 45 students were fluent while at Johor Bahru PEC, 38 students were fluent as compared to the Batu Pahat PEC, where all the students (12 students) were fluent in speaking the Punjabi language. Only a mere two and three students from Petaling Jaya PEC and Johor Bahru PEC respectively indicated that they were able to communicate in the Punjabi language moderately.

3.6.3 Conceptual Framework

This study is conducted based on the conceptual framework as portrayed in Figure 3.6

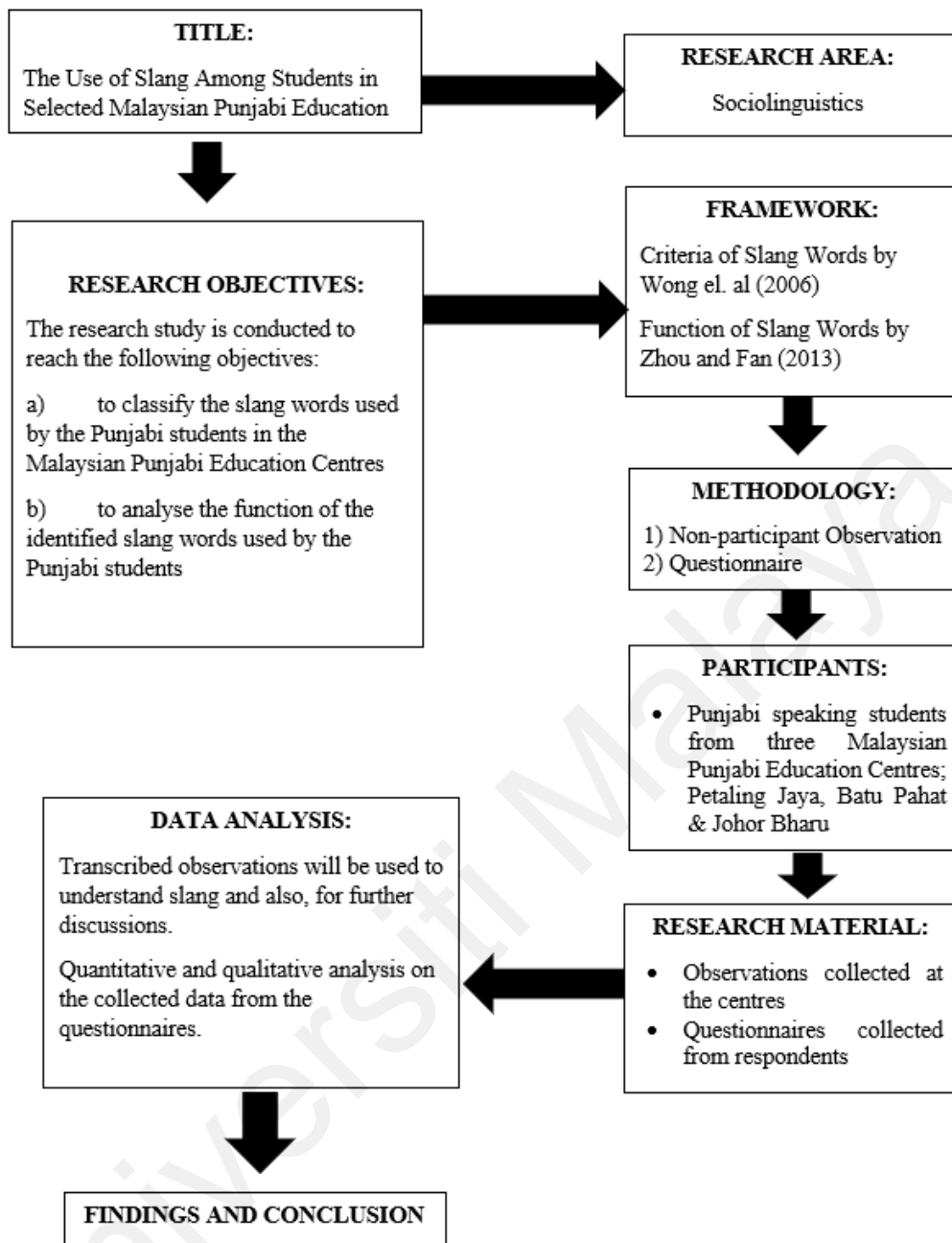


Figure 3.6 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The current study adapts the criteria framework by Dumas and Lighter in Wong and Parco (2006), for the identification of slang words. Figure 3.6 presents the novel conceptual framework used to support this study. The shown conceptual framework demonstrates the pathway of the current study, starting at the field of the research, which helps to develop the title of the study. The research objectives propagate the research by choosing accurate frameworks, which deals with the selection criteria of the slang words

and also, the functions of the slang words. Two methodological approaches were carried out on the participants in order to examine and collect the intended data. The data were then analysed to derive the findings which lead to the conclusion of the findings.

3.7 Chapter Summary

In a summary, the current study adheres to the criteria framework by Dumas and Lighter in Wong and Parco (2006) and the framework of functions of slang words by Zhou and Fan (2013), for identifying the functions of the slang words collected through the study. The next chapter, Chapter 4, will provide the findings of the current study.

Universiti Malaysia

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the findings of this study, which were obtained from non-participant observations and questionnaires. 293 slang words were collected from the participants. Firstly, the collected data was examined and classified into slang words as a preliminary grouping. Next, the identified slang words were analyzed and examined for its comparisons in terms of usage in primary and secondary school, among female and male users, in urban and sub-urban settings, type of words utilized, and also their functions as slang words based on the proposed framework.

This chapter presents the overall findings of the data, attempting to answer the following research questions of the study:

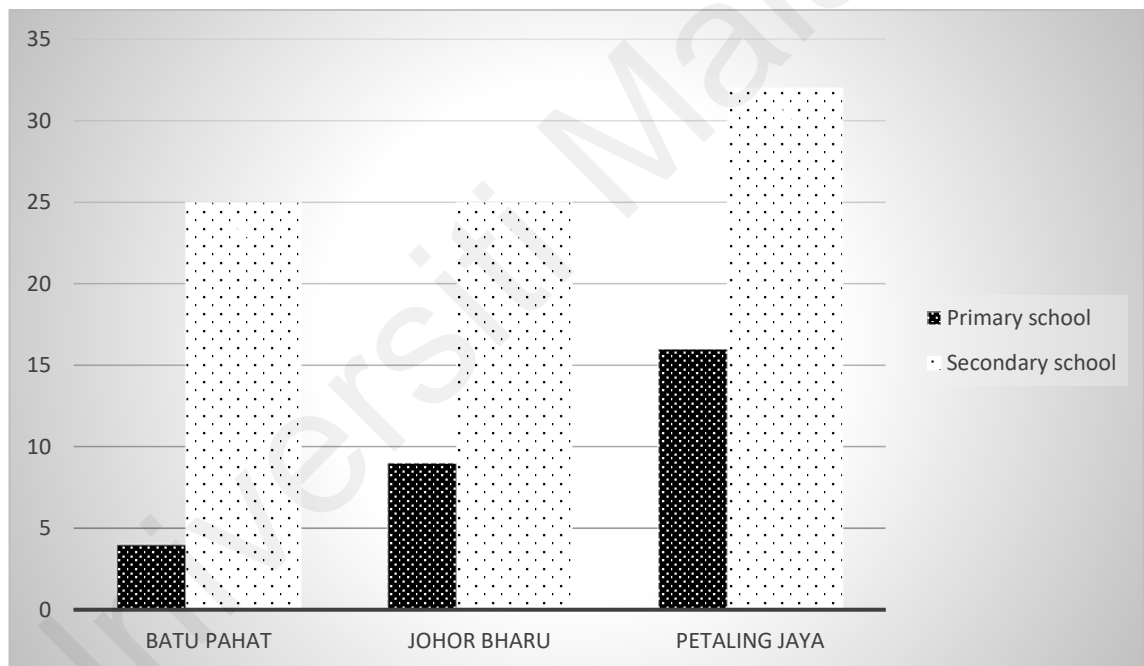
1. What are the slang words used by the Punjabi students in the Malaysian Punjabi Education Centres?
2. How do the identified words function as slang words in the Punjabi language?

4.1 Primary and Secondary school students

Figure 4.1 shows the usage of Punjabi slang words among the primary and secondary schools at the three Punjabi Education Centres in Batu Pahat, Johor Bahru and Petaling Jaya. The highest number of Punjabi slang words were used by the secondary school students from Petaling Jaya Punjabi Education Centre, which were 32 slang words, followed by the secondary school students from Batu Pahat and Johor Bahru Punjabi Education Centres, with the same amount of slang words respectively (25 slang words).

As for the primary level, the students from Petaling Jaya Punjabi Education Centre used 16 Punjabi slang words, compared to the Johor Bahru Punjabi Education Centre and the Batu Pahat Education Centre, with 9 and 4 Punjabi slang words respectively. The primary school students did not seem to be too familiar with slang words as they were only able to produce a small number of slang words. Figure 4.1 is shows the usage of Punjabi slang words among primary and secondary school students at the three Punjabi Education Centres.

Figure 4.1 The Usage of Punjabi Slang Words among Primary and Secondary School students at the three Punjabi Education Centres

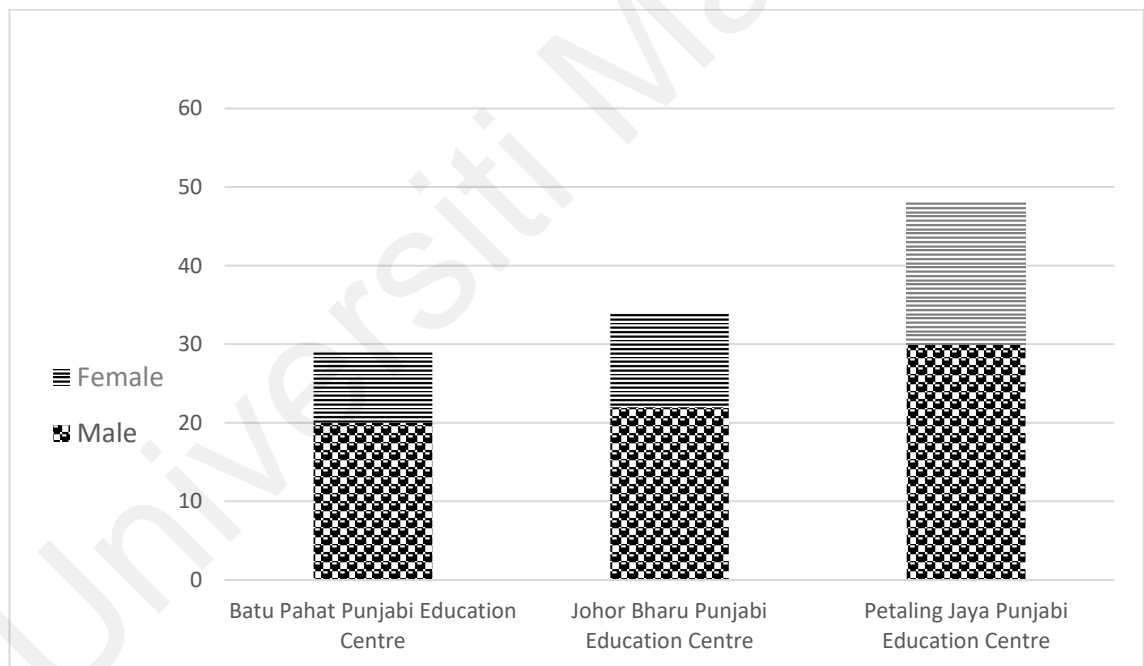


4.2 Gender

Next, the male students at the Petaling Jaya Punjabi Education Centres used the greatest number of slang words, overall, which are 30 slang words, as compared to the Johor Bahru Punjabi Education Centre and the Batu Pahat Punjabi Education Centre with 22 and 20 slang words used, respectively. The number of slang words expressed by the

female students was also the highest at Petaling Jaya Punjabi Education Centre, followed by Johor Bahru Punjabi Education Centre and Batu Pahat Punjabi Education Centre, with 18 slang words, 12 slang words and 9 slang words, respectively. It was noticeable that in terms of gender, the number of slang words used by the male students are higher than the number of slang words used by the female students at the three centres. This finding is aligned to the study conducted by Abah and Nguemo (2016) on the usage of slang on selected undergraduates from the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, which proved that male students used more slang words compared to their female counterparts. Figure 4.2 below shows gender representation of the participants.

Figure 4.2 Gender Representation of the Participants.

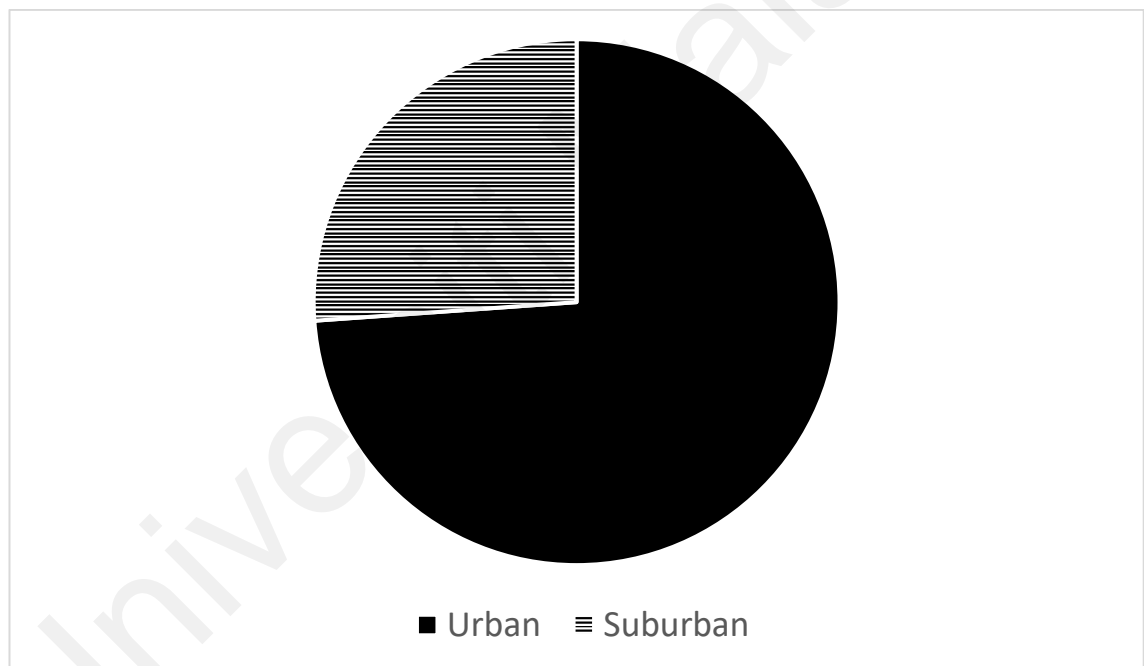


4.3 Locale: Urban and Sub-urban setting

In comparison, the suburban area, Batu Pahat, reported lesser number of slang words, which were 29 slang words (26%), as compared to the urban areas like Johor Bahru and Petaling Jaya, which had a high number of 82 slang words (74%). Nonetheless,

the occurrence at 26% in Batu Pahat is still significant as this shows the expansion of the usage of slang words into small towns like Batu Pahat. This finding is similar to the discover by Suhardianto's (2017) study which investigated the usage of slang in a small city called Batam. Suhardianto's research revealed that the practice of slang words doesn't only influence big cities like Jakarta, Bandung and Surabaya, but also, the smaller cities like Batam. Figure 4.3 below shows the collection of slang words from the participants residing in suburban and urban areas.

Figure 4.3 Collection of Slang Words from the Participants Residing in the Suburban and Urban Areas



4.4 Languages used by the participants

From this study, 293 slang words were gathered from the participants. These respondents used words from languages such as Punjabi, English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil. From Figure 4.4, it is evident that the most popular slang words were of Punjabi origin which is 156 words (53%), followed by the English language with 102 words

(35%) and the Malay language with 26 words (9%). As for the Mandarin language and Tamil language, the number of words is 5 words (2%) and 4 words (1%) respectively. Table 4.1 shows the data on the slang words, derived from various languages, through this study.

Table 4.1 Data on the Slang Words Derived from Different Languages

No	Languages used by the participants	Number of words collected
1	Punjabi	156
2	English	102
3	Malay	26
4	Tamil	4
5	Mandarin	5
TOTAL		293

Slang words are often times found to be language and culturally specific. However, through the advancement of technology and communication, slang bound by a language and a culture cross over to other languages and cultures especially in a setting with multicultural and multilingualism exposure; hence the frequency of intertwining slang into other languages is high (Namvar & Ibrahim, 2014) as is apparent from this study.

Even though the Punjabi slang words are essentially classified as the informal colloquial part of the Punjabi language, it is not necessary for all members of the Punjabi speech community to understand these words, as they are specific to a particular in-group, which is similar to the conclusion drawn by Hoogervorst (2015) from his study on the Malay colloquial language variety in West Malaysia.

Moreover, borrowing lexicals from other languages is considered as a familiar phenomenon in language contact situations like pidgins and creoles (Mahmood, et. al.,

2011). The findings from research carried out by Amir and Azisah (2017) also revealed that the most frequently used slang words among teenagers were borrowed from other languages. Since Malaysia is a multilingual country with a wide range of languages, it is common to have different languages in the vocabulary of Malaysians. A study on borrowing in the Punjabi language claimed that Punjabi speakers borrow words from other languages for the purpose of filling in the gap whilst some other words are borrowed as they are easy to use (Mahmood et.al, 2011). However, the current study only intended to analyse the slang words in the Punjabi language. Accordingly, 156 Punjabi words were analysed to detect if they fit into the classifications of slang words.

The English language has been highly adapted into the conversations of Punjabi language speakers. David et. al. (2003) has indeed confirmed that the Punjabi community in Petaling Jaya especially the younger community is moving away from the Punjabi language and diverting to the English language. This current study supports the research conducted by David et. al. in 2003. The younger generation of today is adapting and assimilating the slang words from the English language into the Punjabi language. Even though the Punjabi slang words collected are higher in number compared to the English words, it doesn't diminish the fact that the Punjabi community is undergoing a language shift.

A preliminary look at the kinds of words employed by Punjabi youth reflects their English origins. For instance, words such as "Bitch", "Crap", "Shit", "Thrash", "Lit", "Fire", "Swag", "Slay", "On fleek", and "On point" are considered as modern slang words (Urban Dictionary). They are used daily to convey messages and to appear cool in front of the other peers. Another term "Amirite" is quite common among young learners. According to Google, it means "am I right?" and it is used to invite validation or proclaim that one's prior statement is precise. The current study had the usage of the term "OMG" by one of the participants. This particular term is popular as it was also reported to be

used by the participants in a study conducted by Suhardianto (2016). The participants used the term “Maggi” extensively, as it was mentioned with a few variations such as “Maggi head” and “Maggi mee”. The brand Maggi is a popular brand known for its instant noodles. These slang terms were used for the sake of nicknames, due to the similarity in the curly-like noodles structure and the hair of the intended person.

Moreover, the Malaysian linguistical setting carries an interesting and conducive environment for the propagation of language shift (Omar, 1982). Hence, with the influx of immigrants and foreign workers, Malaysian English is being culturally enriched with a variety of ethnic groups who speak diverse ethnic languages. Malaysian speakers are well known for the “lah”, as it is associated with disapproval, anger, and persuasion (Kuang., 2002). The current study was able to collect the data with the slang term “lah” by one of the participants. Another slang term used was “huh”, which is heavily used among Malaysians. It is seen as an inseparable component used by the citizens of Malaysia as the true meaning of the message may not be conveyed without the usage of such words like “huh” and “lah” (Kuang, 2002). A study carried out by Kuang concluded that the usage of “lah” and “huh” or “ha” are markers which appear in the beginning, middle or in the end of an utterance. These slang terms were used by Malaysians for the purpose of conveying affirmation, expressing agreement or support, emphasizing importance to questioning, providing continuity, recollecting thoughts, portraying negativity, employing sarcasm or serving as a vehicle for interrogation of someone of a lower status (Kuang, 2002).

Wherever their positions may be, these particles do bear significant implications which may range from being positive, showing agreement, approval, stressing emphasis to questioning, continuing, recollecting trains of thoughts to being negative such as in showing sarcasm, and as a means of interrogating a person of lower authority (Kuang, 2002).

Next, the Malay language is the national language of the country. Hence, we cannot deny the fact that the Malay language has an influence on the minds of our younger generation. David et. al. (2003) confirmed in their study that the younger Malaysian generation tend to use a mixture of Punjabi, English and Malay to converse and it strongly proves the existence of language shift among the users of the Punjabi language. For example, the slang terms “Senju”, “Bojio” and “Kelong” carry the same meaning, which is used for people who back out on promises. These terms are used in Tamil, Mandarin and Malay respectively, so due to the cultural adaptations, they are widely used by Malaysians. Slang terms in Punjabi and Tamil were also used for teachers, such as “pineapple hath”, “jangli bili” and “puchandi”. These terms were used for someone superior as the need to use a nickname which demonstrates the user’s intention to mention the particular individual while attempting to save face.

The Malay, Mandarin and Tamil languages have had an impact on the young Punjabi speakers due to the fact that we are living in a multiracial country with a wide range of languages being spoken each minute. Being surrounded by peers in school, who speak other languages would definitely affect the way one speaks. The Malaysian schooling environment has children from different multilingual settings; hence it is unavoidable to not pick up these languages (Cheng, 2003 & Ching, 2006). However, the students may not have equal competence in all the languages they are exposed to.

4.5 Research Question 1: Classifications of slang words

From this study, 293 slang utterances were gathered from the participants. These respondents used words from languages such as Punjabi, English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil. 156 words belonged to the Punjabi language while the remaining 186 were from the other languages (refer to Appendix A2). From the 156 Punjabi slang words, repeated words in Punjabi were discounted, and thus the total Punjabi slang words to 111.

The words were then analyzed to check if they were slang words, based on the definition of slang words by Dumas and Lighter in Wong and Parco (2006). Based on the classifications by Dumas and Lighter in Wong and Parco (2006), for a word to be considered as a slang word, it has to satisfy two of the four criteria, as follows:

I) its occurrence will evidently lessen the reputation of official discourse or inscription.

II) its usage denotes the user's understanding with the referent, who may be of a lower standing, irresponsible class of individuals.

III) a forbidden word in a usual spoken interaction with people from the higher social status or those with superior accountability.

IV) it's articulated in a predictable yet familiar venue, especially aimed to defend the user from any uneasiness caused and to shield the user from any further exasperation.

The words in this study were analyzed for the two criteria as stated as above, to be determined as qualifying as slang words. The categories are I & II, I & III, I & IV, II & III, II & IV and III & IV, according to the probability.

From the 111 Punjabi words, 68 words were found to be Punjabi slang words (refer to Appendix A3) whereas 43 words did not comply with the four aforementioned criteria, hence they are not considered as slang words. Based on Table 4.2, it can be seen that the highest classification is I & III with 30 slang words, followed by I & II with 13 slang words, II & III with 10 slang words, II & IV with 7 slang words, I & IV with 6 slang words and III & IV with 2 slang words. The classification of the words can be found in the discussion. Some slang words were repeated by the participants, thereby increasing the frequency of occurrence. Criteria I & III received the highest recurrence with 57 words, followed by Criteria I & II with 15 words, Criteria II and III with 14 words, Criteria

II and IV with 13 words, Criteria I and IV with 10 words and lastly, Criteria III and IV with 2 words. Table 4.2 shows the classification of criteria accordingly, with the number of Punjabi slang words; with and without repetition.

Table 4.2 Classification Criteria of the Collected Slang Words

No.	Classification Criteria for Slang Words	Number of Punjabi Slang Words (without repetition)	Number of Punjabi Slang Words (inclusive of repetition)
1	I & II	13	15
2	I & III	30	57
3	I & IV	6	10
4	II & III	10	14
5	II & IV	7	13
6	III & IV	2	2
	TOTAL:	68	111

4.5.1 Criteria I & II

There are 13 slang words or phrases that fit the description of this category. Firstly, the word “Bamb”, which literally means an explosive. In this context, it means something great. This word is widely used in the Punjabi language. In the song “Bamb Jatt”, by Jasmine Sandlas and Amrit Maan, the word “bamb” refers to the characteristics of a charismatic man, whereas the woman in the song is referred to “grenade”, which is another slang in the Punjabi language that means the alluring character of the lady in context. This word is able to lessen the reputation of work if used in a formal context. A similar finding was also reported by Amir and Azisah (2017), where the participants

adopted and imitated slang words from songs. This finding proves the notion made by Pedersen (2007) which mentions that famous personages and well-known celebrities are often times emulated by their fans, especially in terms of using slang words from the film or music industry.

Next, the slang words “Ganjaram”, “Gagi Ganjaram” “Takla” were from the same participant, who has a friend named Gagan. These three terms are used to address someone who is bald. The real reason the term was used is due to the fact that the two alphabets resembled in the names Gagan and Ganjaram. Likewise, “Takla” refers to one who is bald-headed or hairless. Also, it was mentioned in the questionnaire that these terms were used as an inside joke between the user and the listener.

Furthermore, the participants used the words “shotu”, “kadhu”, “Juraa man”, “Gorillakirth”, “pejama fella”, “bapuji”, and “vedi bebe”, as friendly banter and repartee with their friends. These words were used as nicknames, wisecracks and they also served material for jests and teasing among friends who are familiar with one another.

The term “chaar akha” suggests four eyes. The phrase is used for people who wears spectacles, as their glasses are referred to as a new set of eyes which alludes to them being somewhat blur as in dim or unfocused. Table 4.3 shows the slang words that fit the criteria of I & II.

Table 4.3. Slang words that fit the criteria of I & II

No.	Slang Word/ Phrase	Meaning of the slang word	The actual meaning of the slang word	Frequency
1	Bamb	Something great	An explosive	1

2	Ganjaram	My friend, Gagan	To address someone who	1
		Gagan = Ganjaram	is bald	
		Inside joke		
3	Takla	My friend, Gagan	To refer to	1
		Inside joke	someone who is bald	
4	Shotu	Tease	To allude to someone	1
			who is short	
5	Kadhu	Tease, Nickname for self	To call someone Pumpkin	1
6	Juraa man	A nickname	Juraa is a hair bun, created by tying long hair into a knot on one's head.	1
7	Gorillakirth	Nickname for Gurkirth	To refer to the animal, gorilla	1
		Tease, Inside joke about a fair girl	Gori is associated with a fair/European-skinned girl.	

8	Pejama fella	Nickname for Easher Tease	Pajamas, which comprise loose-fitting jacket and trousers for sleeping in.	1
			It suggests the fellow is a “comfy”, easy companion or friend	
9	Tu aap hi ungal layi honi	It’s your fault – An accusation	To imply that you must have touched it with your finger	3
10	Vedi bebe	Nickname for my cousin sister, Sharen	Vedi means big. Bebbeh means old lady.	1
			Vedi bebeh insinuates that the lady is a know it all.	
11	Bapuji	Nickname for my cousin brother	Implies he is like a Grandfather	1
12	Chaar akha	Nickname for someone who wears spectacles	The Literal meaning for four eyes	1

13	Gagi Ganjaram	Nickname for Gagan	To address someone who	
		Tease	is bald	1

4.5.2 Criteria I & III

Criteria I & III encompass vulgar words that are used for the purpose of cussing, teasing and name-calling. The occurrence of these words may inevitably cause the lowering of one's reputation in any formal-related work environment. These words are not to be used, especially when the users are interacting with people from the higher social class or anyone who is their superior. Incidentally, category I & III has the highest number of words, which is 30 slang words.

The slang words used by the participants served as abuse words, profanity, swearwords, cuss words, expletives, invectives, teasing and for name-calling purposes. The slang words revolved around animals such as the donkey, owl, pig, monkey and dog, which underlined various reasons for using them. For instance, "khota" means male donkey and "khoti" means female donkey. The cultural reference for the term "donkey" connotes stupidity (Urban Dictionary). Hence, such terms have an abusive nature to them when they are used in the Punjabi language too. By the same token, the terms "kuta" and "kuti", when translated mean a male dog and a female dog. Urban Dictionary looks at the term "bitch" as a derogatory comment used to indicate either a female dog, a rude person, or one's slave. According to the Online Slang Dictionary, "kutta" is a term from the Hindi language which gives the meaning of one being an uncool person, or a jerk (could be termed as an asshole, which works as a general insult). The similarity in the semantics of these abusive terms indicate that the cultural references stretch across the languages, in this context, the English language, Hindi language and the Punjabi language. The term "kala kuta", on the other hand, means a black dog, which serves as a higher degree of

insult to the word “kutta”. The word black makes it sound more furious which makes the insult sound more intense, according to 3 participants who use the slang word. Another gendered set of slang terms, “bhander” and “bhanderi”, means a male monkey and a female monkey. The participants who used these terms on a daily basis agreed that these slang terms refer to a subtle way of insulting and disparaging the listener or the other party.

Another slang word “ulu da pattha” means the son of an owl, which refers to a foolish man. It may also be used as a cuss word, a term of ridicule, derision and mockery or as a nickname. Traditionally the owl is perceived as a wise creature. However, this slang overturns this notion by suggestion antithetically that being a son of the wise parent is a disgrace to the family, according to the participants.

Moreover, the participants have also developed a sense of mocking one another by using the male and female genitals to poke fun at their peers. The slang words, “fuddhu” and “lann” means penis and male scrotum respectively. The terms “tetu” and “lule”, are used to label men as “tette” (testicles) and lula” (penis), which are degrading in nature. The original meaning of the slang phrase “farlo” is to hold, but in an abusive context, it means “farlo tette”, which means to hold the testicles. It is a vulgar way used to express a disappointment. “Fuddhi” or “foodie” is vagina, which is used as an obscene way of referring to a lady. “Kanjar” (male) and “kanjeri” (female) means a child conceived out of wedlock, which may also mean a bastard, gigolo or a prostitute when used as in the context of slang. Another slang phrase that adheres to the genitals is “teri phen di”. It is used as a cuss word to mean one’s sister’s private part” (vagina) which is a grave insult.

Not only that, weight is also used as a way to communicate in the Punjabi slang language. The slang word “motu” which means a fat male, originated from the word

“mota” (fat). And another word, “tila”, which means toothpick, was used for one of the participant’s enemy to disparage one’s slim figure as to be as thin as a toothpick. The words for a fat man and a toothpick were used in secret, unbeknown to the intended recipient when their user was gossiping about the particular person. Table 4.4 shows the Punjabi slang words that fit the criteria of I & III.

Table 4.4 Slang words that fit the criteria of I & III.

No.	Slang Word/ Phrase	Meaning of the slang word	The actual meaning of the slang word	Frequency
1	Khota	Cuss word Tease A stupid male	A male donkey	3
2	Khoti	Cuss word Tease A stupid female	A female donkey	3
3	Ulu da pattha	Cuss word Tease A foolish man	Son of an owl	2
4	Soor	Cuss word Tease	A male pig	3
5	Bhander	Cuss word Tease A subtle way of abusing the other person (male)	A male monkey	3
6	Bhanderi	Cuss word	A female monkey	3

		Tease		
		A subtle way of abusing the other person (female)		
7	Kuti	Cuss word	A female dog	2
		Tease		
		Bitch		
8	Kuta	Cuss word	A male dog	2
		Tease		
9	Teri phen di	Cuss word	Your sister's.	1
		Your sister's private part		
10	Farlo	Cuss word	Hold the testicles	2
	Farlo tatte	A vulgar way of expressing a disappointment.		
11	Motu	Tease	A fat man	1
		Secret word for gossip		
12	Kala kuta	Cuss word	A black dog	1
		Tease		
13	Panchod	Cuss word	A "sister fucker" / One	1
		Extremely obscene, vulgar or undesirable person	who engages in incestuous sex with their sister	

14	Fuddhu	Cuss word	A Penis	1
15	Fuddhi	Cuss word	A Vagina	1
16	Lann	Cuss word	A Male scrotum	1
17	Tetu	Cuss word	Testicles	1
	Tette	Nickname		
18	Fudho Fudho gagi, Fuddhu	Nickname for my friend Cuss word	A penis	1
19	Lule Lula	Cuss word	A penis.	3
20	Bondu	Slow	A gay person	3
21	Kanjar	A gigolo Cuss word	A male child out of wedlock	3
22	Kanjeri	A prostitute Cuss word	A female child out of wedlock	3
23	Shaitaan di poonch	Used to describe a mischievous kid / person	The devil's tail	3
24	Pendu	Tease Cuss word A stubborn and unintelligent person	A villager	3
25	Fattu	Tease	A Coward	2

26	Kuku	Crazy person Tease	A Chicken	1
27	Ungly	Nickname Tease Cuss word	A Finger	1
28	Foodie	Cuss word	A Vagina	1
29	Tila	Nickname for enemy	A Toothpick	1
30	Perdaan - Bhai	Sarcasm Tease	Perdaan - a president Bhai - a member of an organized crime company or gangster association	1

4.5.3 Criteria I & IV

Next, category I & IV highlights the intention to degrade the reputation of the standard language and also acts as a euphemism to protect the user from any harm. There are 6 slang words which are true to these two criteria, I & IV.

The term “gaddi” refers to a car in the Punjabi language, but when it is used as a slang utterance, it conveys the meaning of a girl who sleeps around indiscriminately. The participants who utilized this term revealed that vehicles are used by people and the same goes with the girl. Another term with a similar notion is “texi”, which means a taxi or a cab. Words such as slut and prostitute are associated with the slang word “texi”, as

they appear to provide services to people. These two slang words are used to slut-shame or stigmatize a woman for her provocative behaviour.

“Hai rabba” is a slang word that means “Oh my god”. This word has multi-purpose uses as it can be applied to express extreme emotions such as surprise, sadness and happiness. The participants were able to relate to this term as many of them mentioned it in their questionnaires. Table 4.5 shows the Punjabi slang words that fit the criteria of I & IV.

Table 4.5 Slang words that fit the criteria of I & IV

No.	Slang Word/ Phrase	Meaning of the slang word	The actual meaning of the slang word	Frequency
1	Hai rabba	To express surprise, sadness, happiness	Oh my god	1
2	Gaddi	Used to call a girl who sleeps around	A car	3
3	Texi	Slut Cuss word	A cab	3
4	Rasgulla	Nickname for my cousin sister, Raspreet	Indian sweets	1
5	Lassi Messy	Nickname for my cousin brother	Lassi is an Indian yoghurt-based drink.	1

6	Gobi boy	Nickname for my brother	Gobi is cabbage.	1
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4.5.4 Criteria II & III

Criteria II & III refers to the special affiliation between the user and the listener through the usage of tabooed terms in casual interactions without the presence of the upper class or someone senior.

The words “Rupi Kaur” and “Sidhu Moosewala” are the names of famous artists who are making their names in the field of poetry and singing, respectively. The participants used these names to address their friends; as their nicknames. From here, we are able to note that the names of famous artists can also be categorized as slang words, as the user and listener shares a close connection. Also, the usage of these terms among friends requires an inside joke to be understood, without the presence of a superior.

“Sala” and “Saleah” are slang variations for the same meaning, which is brother-in-law. The words are used as wisecracks and friendly banter among the user and the listener. The words may also be employed as cuss words, in the form of abusing the other party. “Sali” means sister-in-law, which is also used to serve as mild vulgarity. The usage of this set of slang words represents the user’s shared understanding and familiarity with the person it is used for. Table 4.6 represents the Punjabi slang words from the study that fit the criteria of II & III.

Table 4.6 Slang words that fit the criteria of II & III

No.	Slang Word/ Phrase	Meaning of the slang word	The actual meaning of the slang word	Frequency
1	Sala	Cuss word	Brother-in-law	3
2	Saleah	Cuss word	Brother-in-law	1
3	Sali	Cuss word	Sister-in-law	3
4	Kuta Jeev	Nickname for Jeevraj	Kuta means dog	1
5	Rupi Kaur	Nickname for Shawn Inside joke	Rupi Kaur is a poet	1
6	Sidhu Moosewala	Nickname for friend Inside joke	Sidhu Moose Wala is an Indian singer, lyricist and actor associated with Punjabi music and Punjabi cinema	1
7	Bebe	Nickname for friend. Used for a female who knows it all	Term used for someone elder like mother or grandmother	1

8	Suki machi	Someone who is as thin as a fish.	Suki means thin in Punjabi	1
		Nickname for my sister	Machi means fish in Punjabi	
		Tease		
9	Jurey wala pai	Nickname for my friend	A male Punjabi with a bun of hair created by tying long hair into a knot on one's head	1
		Tease		
10	Raula paun wala	Nickname for my friend	Raula means noise	1
		Tease	Raula paun wala means a male who is noisy makes noise	

4.5.5 Criteria II & IV

Criteria II & IV reflects the user's special understanding of the other target listener with the need of protecting the user from any additional frustration. For example, the usage of the slang words "cha chu" and "cha sha" indicates the user's hospitality of offering the two most used beverages among the Punjabi society, which is the Punjabi cha and the alcohol. The terms "cha" means tea. The Punjabi language often imitates the first word, to produce new words like "cha chu" and "cha sha". Other example of slang words in the Punjabi words are "khana khuna" and "pani puni", in which "khana" means

food and “pani” means water. The second word that follows the slang word suggests that option for the guests to request for any food or drink. Interestingly, drugs and alcohol are often times disguised in language use, to avoid outsiders like the police from knowing about them (Pedersen, 2007).

The word “phenji” means an elder sister in the Punjabi language. The term was converted into a slang word when it was being used by students at the Punjabi Education Centre. The meaning changed to allude to a Punjabi school teacher, which also conveys respect towards the elderly.

“Sir na khaa” means “don’t eat my head”, literally. The sentence is considered to be slang as it refers to the user instructing the other party to stop irritating the user. It is a commonly used phrase in a Punjabi household, as it was used by the participants multiple times. Table 4.7 below demonstrates the Punjabi slang words with the criteria of II & IV.

Table 4.7 Slang words that fit the criteria of II & IV

No.	Slang Word/ Phrase	Meaning of the slang word	The actual meaning of the slang word	Frequency
1	Cha chu	Tea or Alcohol	Cha means tea	2
2	Cha sha	Tea or Alcohol	Cha means tea	2
3	Phenji	Punjabi School Teacher	An elder sister	3
4	Bilu	To address someone’s blue eyes Cat	Bili means cat	1

5	Kari Kaur	Nickname for Karina Inside joke	Kari is an Indian dish, cooked at home.	1
6	Sir na khaaa	Stop irritating me	Don't eat my head	3
7	Ganja	Rajveer's favourite joke	A bald man	1

4.5.6 Criteria III & IV

Criteria III & IV presents the usage of vulgar words with synonymity to save the user from any embarrassment. The slang “jangli bili” means a wild female cat. It is reported to be used by one of the participants for the tuition teacher who is always furious. The slang term is also employed to tease the tuition teacher, in order to save the user from any harm from using it. Another slang term that was used for the participant’s teacher is “pineapple hath”. It used as a tease material to make fun of the teacher as apparently, she has big hands. Once again, the term is used in a discreet manner to shield the user from any negative consequences. Table 4.8 represents the Punjabi slang words with criteria III & IV.

Table 4.8 Slang words that fit the criteria of III & IV

No.	Slang Word/ Phrase	Meaning of the slang word	The actual meaning of the slang word	Frequency
1	Jangli bili	My tuition teacher’s angry nature	A wild female cat	1

		Tease		
2	Pineapple hath	Nickname for my teacher's big hands	Hath means hand	1
		Tease		

4.5.7 Repeating slang words

The table below shows captures the frequency of repetition of the slang words. All the slang words reoccur either twice or thrice. Most of the slang words are cuss words, such as “sali”, “sala”, “kuti”, “kuta” and disparaging terms such as “texi” and “gaddi”. From the data, it can be concluded that the participants used slang words for the benefit of name-calling, cuss and tease words as it recorded as the highest category in this study. Table 4.9 below portrays the frequency of the reoccurrences of Punjabi slang words

Table 4.9 Frequency of reoccurrence of Punjabi slang words

No.	Slang Word	Frequency
1	Cha chu	2
2	Cha sha	2
3	Khota	3
4	Khoti	3
5	Phenji	3
6	Ulu da pattha	2
7	Soor	3

8	Bhander	3
9	Bhanderi	3
10	Kuti	2
11	Kuta	2
12	Sala	3
13	Sali	3
14	Shi shi	3
15	Farlo	2
16	Gaddi	3
17	Lule	3
18	Bondu	3
19	Kanjar	3
20	Kanjeri	3
21	Texi	3
22	Shaitaan di poonch	3
23	Pendu	3
24	Sir na khaaa	3
25	Tu aap hi ungal layi honi	3
26	Fattu	2

4.6 Research Question 2: Functions of slang words

The second research question aims to categorize the slang words in the Punjabi language according to their functions. According to Zhou and Fan (2013), people are often questioning the function of slang as they are not able to provide a comprehensive outlook to that question. Slang helps to build interpersonal communication among people,

which serves as the most basic function of any language. Hence, Zhou and Fan (2013) believes that slang becomes simple when we are able to examine its function. For the current research, only 68 Punjabi slang words were examined for their functions and the rest of the slang words were from other languages, such as English, Malay, Tamil and Mandarin. Table 4.10 represents the 68 Punjabi slang words from Petaling Jaya Punjabi Centre Education, Johor Bahru Punjabi Centre Education and Batu Pahat Punjabi Education Centre.

Table 4.10 68 Punjabi slang words from all three Punjabi Education Centres

No.	Slang Word/ Phrase	Meaning of the slang word	The actual meaning of the slang word
1	Bamb	Something great	An explosive
2	Ganjaram	My friend, Gagan Gagan = Ganjaram	To address someone who is bald
		Inside joke	
3	Takla	My friend, Gagan	To address someone who is bald
		Inside joke	
4	Shotu	Tease	To address someone who is short
5	Kadhu	Tease Nickname for self	Pumpkin
6	Juraa man	A nickname	Juraa is a bun of hair created by tying of the long hair into a knot on one's head.

7	Gorillakirth	Nickname for Gurkirth Tease Inside joke about a fair girl	Gorilla is an animal. Gori is a fair/European-skinned girl.
8	Pejama fella	Nickname for Easher Tease	Pajamas is loose-fitting jacket and trousers for sleeping in. Fellow is a companion or friend
9	Tu aap hi ungal layi honi	It's your fault	You must have touched it with your finger
10	Vedi bebe	Nickname for my cousin sister, Sharen	Vedi means big. Bebeh means old lady. Vedi bebeh means a lady who knows it all.
11	Bapuji	Nickname for my cousin brother	Grandfather
12	Chaar akha	Nickname for someone who wears spectacles	Literal meaning for four eyes
13	Gagi Ganjaram	Nickname for Gagan Tease	To address someone who is bald
14	Khota	Cuss word	A male donkey

		Tease	
		A stupid male	
15	Khoti	Cuss word	A female donkey
		Tease	
		A stupid female	
16	Ulu da pattha	Cuss word	Son of an owl
		Tease	
		A foolish man	
17	Soor	Cuss word	A male pig
		Tease	
18	Bhander	Cuss word	A male monkey
		Tease	
		A subtle way of abusing the other person (male)	
19	Bhanderi	Cuss word	A female monkey
		Tease	
		A subtle way of abusing the other person (female)	
20	Kuti	Cuss word	A female dog
		Tease	
		Bitch	
21	Kuta	Cuss word	A male dog
		Tease	

22	Teri phen di	Cuss word	Literally means your sister's. Your sister's private part
23	Farlo	Cuss word	Farlo tatte -Hold the testicles -A vulgar way of expressing a disappointment.
24	Motu	Tease	Mota means a fat man
		Secret word for gossip	
25	Kala kuta	Cuss word	A black dog
		Tease	
26	Panchod	Cuss word	-
		A "sister fucker"	
27	Fuddhu	Cuss word	Penis
28	Fuddhi	Cuss word	Vagina
29	Lann	Cuss word	Male scrotum
30	Tetu	Cuss word	Tette, which means testicles
		Nickname	in Punjabi
31	Fudho Fudho gagi	Nickname for my friend	Fuddhu means penis
		Cuss word	
32	Lule	Cuss word	"Lula" refers to penis.
33	Bondu	Slow	A gay person
		Tease	

34	Kanjar	A gigolo Cuss word	A male child out of wedlock
35	Kanjeri	A prostitute Cuss word	A female child out of wedlock
36	Shaitaan di poonch	Used to describe a mischievous kid/person	The devil's tail
37	Pendu	Tease Cuss word A stubborn and unintelligent person	A villager
38	Fattu	Tease	Coward
39	Kuku	Crazy person Tease	Chicken
40	Ungly	Nickname Tease Cuss word	Finger
41	Foodie	Cuss word	Vagina
42	Tila	Nickname for enemy	Toothpick
43	Perdaan-Bhai	Sarcasm Tease	Perdaan means a president Bhai is used to indicate a member of an organized crime company or gangster association

44	Hai rabba	To express surprise, sadness, happiness	Oh my god
45	Gaddi	Used to call a girl who sleeps around	A car
46	Texi	Slut Cuss word	A cab
47	Rasgulla	Nickname for my cousin sister, Raspreet	Indian sweets
48	Lassi Messy	Nickname for my cousin brother	Lassi is an Indian yoghurt- based drink.
49	Gobi boy	Nickname for my brother	Gobi is cabbage.
50	Sala	Cuss word	Brother in law
51	Saleah	Cuss word	Brother in law
52	Sali	Cuss word	Sister in law
53	Kuta Jeev	Nickname for Jeevraj	Kuta means dog
54	Rupi Kaur	Nickname for Shawn Inside joke	Rupi Kaur is a poet
55	Sidhu Moosewala	Nickname for friend Inside joke	Sidhu Moose Wala is an Indian singer, lyricist and actor

			associated with Punjabi music and Punjabi cinema
56	Bebe	Nickname for friend Used for a female who knows it all	Term used for someone elder like mother or grandmother
57	Suki machi	Someone who is as thin as a fish Nickname for my sister Tease	Suki means thin in Punjabi Machi means fish in Punjabi
58	Jurey wala pai	Nickname for my friend Tease	A male Punjabi with a bun of hair created by tying of the long hair into a knot on one's head
59	Raula paun wala	Nickname for my friend Tease	Raula means noise Raula paun wala means a male that makes noise
60	Cha chu	Tea or Alcohol	Cha means tea
61	Cha sha	Tea or Alcohol	Cha means tea
62	Phenji	Punjabi School Teacher	An elder sister
63	Bilu	To address someone's blue eyes	Bili means cat

		Cat	
64	Kari Kaur	Nickname for Karina	Kari is an Indian dish, cooked at home.
		Inside joke	
65	Sir na khaaa	Stop irritating me	Don't eat my head
66	Ganja	Rajveer's favourite joke	A bald man
67	Jangli bili	My tuition teacher's angry nature	A wild female cat
		Tease	
68	Pineapple hath	Nickname for my teacher's big hands	Hath means hand
		Tease	

From the analysis of the 68 Punjabi slang words, it was found that there were 9 functions of the slang words identified from this study. Table 4.11 shows the functions of slang words, that were collected and interpreted from the participants.

Table 4.11 Function of slang words used by the participants

No.	Functions of Slang Words	Number of Slang Words	Frequency of Slang Words	Percentage of Slang Words (%)
1	Cuss words	25	49	37
2	Secret code	13	17	19
3	Tease	13	18	19
4	Hyperbole	5	9	7
5	Nickname	4	4	6

6	Politeness	3	7	4
7	Metaphor	3	5	4
8	Expressing feelings	1	1	2
9	Sarcasm	1	1	2
	TOTAL	68	111	100

The current study shows that the usage of slang words involves various forms and functions, such as cuss words, secret code, tease, hyperbole, nickname, politeness, metaphor, expressing feelings and sarcasm. The function with the highest number of words were cuss words with 25 words (37%), followed by secret code and tease with 13 words (19%) each. There are 5 slang words used as hyperbole (7%) and 4 slang words for nicknames (6%). The slang words which functioned as politeness and metaphor were both with 3 slang words (4%) and for expressing feelings and sarcasm, there was only 1 slang word (2%) for both functions.

A study by Sultana and Masood (2017) examined the changes in linguistic patterns of Pakistani college boys and girls upon viewing Indian movies with slang words. Their research findings elaborated the usage of slang words in different forms such as address, aggressive, abusive and taunting. The current research addressed similar findings for functions as the aforementioned study, such as nickname, hyperbole, cuss words and tease. Sultana and Masood quoted that the presence of slang words in different forms is usually done in Indian movies to catch the attention of the audience. Likewise, the current study portrayed an array of functions to clasp the attention of the listeners.

Cuss words topped the rest of the slang words by 37%. One of the slang terms used by the participants was the term “foodie”. This particular term is originally an English slang word used to refer to someone who has a keen interest in food. The spelling was different from the originally spelt “fuddhi” in the Punjabi language, which meant vagina. According to Suryanto and Setiawan (2016), the misspelling of any slang term is intentionally done in order to defy restrictions set in chat rooms and forums. These users misspell the words in order to escape the consequences of using taboo words. For example, the slang term “crap” has been occasionally misspelt as “carp” online in chat rooms and forums. These intentional mispronunciations are called malapropism. Many online users get away with it, as it is seen as a deliberate mistake. Similar to the current study, the users are hiding behind misspellings to excuse themselves from the consequences, if there are any. In many cases these words are not even viewed as taboo when they are misspelt. A sociolinguistic study of youth slang amongst the Hong Kong adolescents by Wong and Parco (2006) reported findings on slang words containing malapropism. The only method to decipher the projected meaning of the slang expression is to get rid of the standard interpretations, with the help of phonological clues and situational circumstances. The current study reported a significant finding in the heavy use of female and male genitals, in term of cuss words. Pedersen (2007) analysed the usage of slang in a football TV show entitled “Little Britain” and a film named “Football Factory”. In his study, there were findings referring to female genitals. It was reported that the word “cunt” was used consistently in the TV show and the film. Even though this word is provocative in nature, if it is used among friends, it is considered as a tolerable term. Pedersen (2007) also elaborated that the youth are comfortable to use strong cuss words with one another as it somehow proved that they are good friends. Eble in Pedersen (2007) supported that the fowl name-calling was done to identify with other group

members. The current study concurs with this notion as cuss words were used as slang among friends.

Secret code was found in the current study as 19% usage amongst the participants. The usage of slang words such as “gaddi” and “texi”, which literal meaning translates to a car and a cab respectively. The terms were used covertly to address females who would sleep around and act like sluts. A study by Perumal (2008) discusses the findings on slang words amongst university students. In the particular study, the participants used the term “Open book” that refers to the girls who would go out with anyone and the term “Touch n Go” which indicated the girls or boys who were keen on having fun. These terms are used by the participants to label someone with the intention of speaking about them with no posed boundaries.

Tease recorded 19% of the slang words used by the participants in this study. Slang words such as “shotu”, “kadhu” and “fattu” were used to tease someone regarding their height, weight and abilities. The word “shotu” is commonly used for someone who is small in age, which was intendedly used for someone who was short and “kadhu”, which is pumpkin in the Punjabi language, was intended for someone who chubby and cute in nature. Whereas “fattu” was used for someone who is a coward, and intendedly used as a tease for someone who was a weakling. Another term found in the current study echoing tease was the term “Juraa man”, with “Juraa” which meant a bun of hair with a knot on one’s head, whereas “man” as used widely in the English language to portray superhero qualities like Batman, Spiderman and Aquaman. The term “Juraa man” was used as a nickname and a tease for a friend to derive focus on the person’s power relying on the “Juraa”. Tease-like slang words were commonly found in the current study as the participants who were school children are prone to tease their friends or classmates as a part of their habit at school. More studies should be conducted on slang words revolving around tease as there weren’t many studies reported.

The current study also reported using slang words for the function of hyperbole. These results are in agreement with a quote by Rasekh in Suhardianto (2016), who defined slang as a vernacular vocabulary used to function as exaggeration. Three hyperboles used by participants in this study are terms related to the body parts of a human. Slang terms like “Tu aap hi ungal layi honi”, “Chaar akha” and “Sir na khaaa” used body parts such as the finger, eyes and head. “Tu aap hi ungal layi honi” literally means that the user is accusing someone of touching something using his/her finger, which actually means that the user is blaming one to have done something. The expression “chaar akha” means four eyes, whereas the intended meaning describes someone who wears spectacles. The term “Sir na khaa” literally means that the user is urging one to not eat the user’s head, which is intended to let the listener know that he/she should stop irritating the user. The findings in the current study on the usage of slang using hyperbole, especially revolving around the human body parts, has not been seen in any of the studies.

The findings in the current research recorded 6% of slang words involving nicknames for their friends, family or people they hardly know. The current research aligns with a study by Morgan, O’Neil and Harre (1979), as cited in Arua and Alimi (2013), which concluded that there was a use of personal nicknames among school children. Just like the aforementioned study, the current study recorded the usage of personal nicknames parallel to ethnic groups. The study by Morgan, O’Neil and Harre (1979), as cited in Arua and Alimi (2013) also claimed that the creation of nicknames used etymological processes in the same manner as those employed by children, such as composing rhymes. The current study also had rhymed nicknames, such as “Gagi Ganjaram”, “Rasgulla”, and “Kari Kaur”, which were used instead of “Gagan”, “Raspreet” and “Karina” respectively. Pedersen’s (2007) study on the usage of slang words in the TV show “Little Britain” and film “Football Factory” revealed that nicknames are wielded as evidence to show that the user of the slang words are ironically

close to his/her friends as the presence of nicknames amongst friends solidifies the friendship. It is backed by Eble in Pedersen (2007) who claims that foul name-calling serves as one of the functions of slang in relating with other group members, as seen in this study as well.

Politeness terms were found at about 4% of the total slang words in the current study. Amir and Azisah (2017) conducted a study on gender analysis on slang words used amongst the students of Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar and it revealed that male and female used different slang words in terms of situations, age, politeness and gender as well. Based on the interview done by Amir and Azisah (2017), the participants exposed that they would speak politely using Standard English instead of slang, especially with someone who was senior in age. The current study reflected the same results as the participants recorded that they used polite words to refer to someone elder to them. For example, the term “phenji”, which clearly means an elder sister in the Punjabi language, but is used widely at all the Punjabi Education Centres to refer to Punjabi school teachers. It is considered as a sign of respect to address the teachers as elder sisters. Besides that, it also forms and strengthens the bond between the students and the teacher, which causes the students to have a high level of affective filter during the teaching and learning sessions. Affective filter hypothesis is important especially in language learning. According to Stephen Krashen (1982), language learning serves as a hurdle if the learner is blocked with language anxiety or stress. In other words, the emotional state of the learners influences the language acquisition of the learners. A higher affective filter is encouraged by making the learner feel safe and comfortable in the classroom, in order to ensure a smooth teaching and learning process.

4% of the slang terms used in this particular study consists of metaphors. A research study was conducted by Arua and Alimi (2013) to examine the formation and structure of English language slang words at the University of Botswana. The study by

Arua and Alimi (2013) proved that the usage of metaphorical slang words was common among university students, as these slang words have been modified to fit students' unusual slang needs. Slang words concerning food, death and religion were the highlights of their study. Death metaphors such as *bad pill* for incompetent lecturers and *sinkers* for failing grades and bad lecturers were used extensively. Other metaphors for religion included *false prophets*, *messiah* and *ancestors* implied as slang words for good or bad lecturers and students who stayed longer than they should at campus. As comparison to the current study, there were metaphors used as slang words to describe other people. An example of slang word such as "Shaitaan di poonch", which means the tail of the devil, was used to describe a kid or a person who is mischievous. The slang term dictated a similar meaning as the devil who is evil and up to no good. The child has been regarded as someone who has done something bad. Another metaphorical slang word used in the current study was "suki machi" which referred to someone who is as thin as a fish, by using the words "suki" which means thin and "machi" which means fish. Andersson and Trudgill (1990) concur with the notion that metaphorical slang terms are considered as long-distance slang words as they are not to be interpreted literally, just like the slang expression "suki machi".

For the function of expressing feelings at 2%, the slang term "Hai rabba" means "Oh my god". This word is used apprehensively by the participants to express emotions related to surprise, sadness and also, happiness. According to Finegan (2004), many sociolinguistics have reported that slang acts as an indicator of rebellious feelings amongst the users, as they share their emotions through the slang expressions. Students share emotions with one another as it is considered common to have similar experience with their peers. The current research concurs with the aforementioned statement as students are able to relate to one another when they are going through similar emotions.

Ranking at 2%, alongside expressing feeling, sarcasm is one of the functions of slang words recorded in the current study. Mattiello (2005) quoted that figurative language plays an important part in the creation of vocabulary for slang such as sarcasm. It was also mentioned by Mattiello (2005) that sarcasm found in slang words had the inclination to suggest opposite meanings than what is being said. For example, the words *bad*, *dark* and even *sick* could mean *good*, if they are used with a proper intonation. English slang words like, *Big deal!* or even *No shit!* are used sarcastically to express *no great wonder*. In the current study, there was only one sarcastic slang word used by the participants. The slang term “Perdaan bhai” was used by one of the students, whereby “Perdaan” means the president and “bhai” is used to indicate a gang member of any underground criminal association. The participants in the current study are school students and the usage of such term was used in the form of sarcasm towards another person. More studies on sarcasm slang words should be done as to investigate how these slang words evolve.

The current study confirms that the meaning of slang words can be interpreted in various ways; hence, it is conclusive to say that slang words do not carry fixed meanings, even within a community and different generations. In addition to that, the slang words do not have any precise definitions and due to that, the lexical meaning of the slang words are distorted. Zamaletdinova and Izmaylova (2016) conducted a study aimed to examine the features of the youth slang and its functions in language-based settings. The results of the study by Zamaletdinova and Izmaylova (2016) indicated that most of the students used slang words especially when they are conversing with their peers, similar to the findings of the current study. This concludes that slang words are used amongst peers of similar age group. Other findings in the study of Zamaletdinova and Izmaylova (2016) showed that there weren't any violent slang words used by the

participants. The current study disagrees with the aforementioned study as the participants in the current study recorded a usage of 37% of cuss words.

4.6.1 Equivalence of Zhou and Fan's (2013) Framework

As discussed in Chapter Two, the framework for examining the functions of slang words in this study was based on Zhou and Fan (2013). To recapitulate, there are three functions proposed by Zhou and Fan (2013), which are Pursuit of Self-Identity, Emotive Feeling of the slang users and Achieving Politeness. The functions found in this study correspond with Zhou and Fan's (2013) framework as follows:

Firstly, out of all the listed functions found in this study, Emotive Feelings had the highest occurrences. Seven of the functions which were cuss words, expressing feelings, hyperbole, metaphor, nickname, sarcasm and tease words, correspond to the Emotive Feelings function in Zhou and Fan (2013). The total were 52 slang words. Next, in Zhou and Fan's function of Achieving Politeness, in this study, there was only 3 slang words referring to politeness. Finally, the function of secret code from this study, resembles the Pursuit of Self-Identity, with a total of 13 words. Table 4.12 represents the equivalence of the Punjabi slang words with Zhou and Fan's (2013) framework, in terms of functions of slang words.

Table 4.12 Equivalence of Zhou and Fan's (2013) Framework of Functions of Slang with the Functions of Slang Words from the Current Study.

No.	Equivalence to Functions of Slang Words from the current study	Number of Slang words	Percentage of Slang Words (%)
1	Emotive Feeling of the Slang Users Cuss words, Expressing	52	77

		feelings,		
		Hyperbole,		
		Metaphor,		
		Nickname,		
		Sarcasm, Tease		
2	Pursuit of Self- Identity	Secret code	13	19
3	Achieving Politeness	Politeness	3	4

The Punjabi slang words with Emotive Feeling function are the most found in this study at 77% as compared to the other two functions, which are Pursuit of Self-identity and Achieving Politeness; faring at 19% and 4% respectively (as depicted in Figure 4.6 on the following page)

Based on these figures, it can be concluded that the Punjabi language users are keen on expressing their opinions and attitudes when they are engaging in conversations with their peers. The Emotive Feeling of the slang users reflects the speaker's attitude towards his/her subject. This function is considered as one of the most powerful purposes of language, as it helps the speaker to express himself in revealing his emotions, stances, feelings and opinions regarding certain subjects (Zhou & Fan, 2013). The usage of cuss words among the participants are the most which could be worrisome to the community these youths belong to. Profanity is used at large by the Punjabi youth at all the three Punjabi Education Centres.

Young Punjabi language users constantly utter slang words containing obscenity, especially with their friends. They express themselves extensively when they are in

contact with their peers. Pedersen (2007) concurs that the youth use condescending words when they are with their closest friends. Pedersen (2007) further elaborates that the word “cunt” may seem offensive to strangers, but when the term is used amongst close friends, it is considered as an acceptable term. Ironically, youth nowadays believes that the usage of these strong words serves as evidence of being really good friends. The current study concurs with another research study by Andrianto, (2015), where the researcher analysed the function of slang words in the movie, “Ride Along”. In Andrianto’s (2015) study, the function of Emotive Feeling surpasses the other two functions such as Achieving Politeness and Pursuit of Self Identity. The characters in the movie “Ride Along” express their emotions and feelings extensively throughout the movie. Hence, it is one of the reasons why Emotive Feeling function bagged the highest number of slang words.

As for the function of Pursuit of Self-identity, Falaky’s (2016) study on the usage of slang among the Egyptian youth, recorded 25% of participants who supported that slang was accountable for forming bonds and blending with members of the same mindsets. The participants of the aforementioned study believed that there is a need for the youngsters to set limitations with the older generations by producing secret codes among their peers. The Egyptian youth do not feel the need to stay loyal to their standard language nor do they feel committed to their society, hence the usage of slang words strengthens among the Egyptian youngsters (Falaky, 2016). Similarly, Sultana and Masood (2017) concludes that the participants of their study used additional slang words when they were with their friends compared to their family members, as they wanted to be accepted and have their own sense of identity.

A study by Amir and Azisah. (2017) focused on the gender analysis on slang words used by university students in their daily conversations. The significant findings of the aforementioned study indicated that there were many factors for the users to decide if they were going to use slang expressions in the conversations. Factors like gender,

circumstances, the emotions of the participants, the formality of the conversation mattered in the usage of slang words, but two most important factors identified by Amir and Azisah (2017) were the politeness and the age of the people surrounding the users. Similarly, the current study revealed that the participants were only comfortable using informal slang words only with their peers or someone of the same age group. The participants from the current study are from a lower age range as compared to the participants from Amir and Azisah's (2017) study who were students from the university. However, the interesting comparison between both studies revealed that both categories of participants respect the seniority and the age of elder individuals enough to not converse in slang words when there is a presence of older individuals among them.

4.7 Chapter Summary

The findings of the current study indicate that there were 68 Punjabi slang words used among the participants from the three Punjabi Education Centres. The findings also demonstrated that the Punjabi slang words were categorised into six classifications criteria. The analysis of the 68 Punjabi slang words revealed the nine functions of slang words. Most Punjabi slang words used by the participants functioned as emotive feelings of the slang users by recording a total of 52 slang words. The next chapter will provide a summarized view of the current study.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter assists as the final chapter of the study. It focuses on concluding the discussions of the findings of the current study, and presenting them in accordance with the objectives of the study. It also emphasizes the importance and contribution of this research to the field, and provides recommendations to future linguists working in the same or similar areas of inquiry.

5.1 Summary of Research Question 1

The slang words used by the Punjabi students in the Malaysian Punjabi Education Centres.

It was found that the Punjabi language speakers, especially the younger school children in Malaysia, freely use a fusion of slang words among themselves. The occurrence of these words proved that the primary and secondary school students have friends from different backgrounds and cultures. The ability to communicate using phrases or words from other languages also indicates that the youth of Malaysia are co-existing in a multiethnic community, and as such it is important to maintain the peace and unity among Malaysians. The current study has demonstrated that slang occurs in the Punjabi language, as it supports the notion by Namvar and Ibrahim (2014) which clarified that slang occurs in all the languages. Not only that, the present study verified that the usage of Punjabi slang word among the primary school students are lesser compared to the usage of slang words amongst the secondary school students. Primary school students are considered new formal language learners as compared to secondary school students,

who are looked as advanced and expert, considering their experience in dealing with the language. Hence, the primary school students are keen to follow the rules of the standardized Punjabi language as compared to the secondary school students. The probability of primary school student adapting to informal language is lesser compared to secondary school students.

Furthermore, some Punjabi slang words from the participants were adopted and imitated from famous Punjabi songs. This shows that slang words are picked up by the users of the language if they are used by their favourite people or celebrities whom they admire. As the popular saying goes, imitation is the greatest form of flattery, thus these slang words are used to be a step closer to the people they admire. Namvar and Ibrahim's (2014) findings supported the fact that exposure to media sources is helpful for colloquial speech and the understanding of slang words.

Next, the majority of the Punjabi slang words were employed to ridicule and tease the user's friends. The usage of animal names portrayed double meanings to these cuss words. The participants also made references to male and female genitals to mock their friends. Youth are generally curious; hence the usage of such words suggests their interest in sexuality matters (Okpanachi, 2000). The rise of extreme derogatory terms in the twentieth century to describe women in a sexual and objectifying way has seen the continuation in this century, as evidenced by the current study which recorded slang terms used by the participants to slut-shame woman. This study has proven that primary and secondary school students have been using foul language in order to cuss, abuse and victimise others which reflect inappropriate behavior. Young children are using foul language as a way to explore the language, but this behaviour should not be encouraged as they should be taught to speak respectfully with others.

The participants also used slang terms that showed hospitality and politeness towards others. Such terms were availed to address their superiors or elders. The

hospitality-based slang words were utilized to invite guests for a drink, either for tea or alcohol. Additionally, typical Punjabi words practice rhyming compounds, one of the least investigated type of word formation as mentioned by Benczes (2012). These rhyming compounds, which possess a rhyming construction, are often times used in English and a number of Asian languages (Benczes, 2012) For future researchers, there is a potential area for further study.

Punjabi slang words were also used by the participants for the teachers. The slang words were employed to tease or gossip about their educators whilst additionally serving as a shield for the students themselves against any harm or humiliation they may be exposed to. The names of the superiors have been shaded with identifiers as to protect the identity of the person being mentioned. These terms were used by giving nicknames to the superior, so that the user and listener were able to have an in-group exchange, even when they are surrounded by people. These slang words were meant to be communicated with an insider with similar experience with the user, and they acted as a secret code to relieve the participant's frustrations while at the same time, save the user from any harm that may arise from the usage of slang utterances.

All in all, the current study had 48 boys and 52 girls as participants from the three Punjabi Education Centres. Even though the number of boys were lesser than girls in the study, the females used 39 slang words as compared to the males who availed themselves of 72 slang words. Despite their lesser numbers, male students used more slang words as compared their counterparts. It is accurate to claim that males are better at creating and also, using slang terms, rather than females.

5.2 Summary of Research Question 2

The functions of slang words in the Punjabi language.

With regard to their purpose, the slang words in the current study were found to have functions such as cuss words, expressing feelings, hyperbole, metaphor, nickname, politeness, sarcasm, secret code and tease. These functions were able to be fitted into the proposed framework by Zhou and Fan (2013), with three main functions; pursuit of self-identity, emotive feelings of slang users and achieving politeness. The Punjabi slang words garnered for the current study were found to be using the function of emotive feeling as it recorded the highest number of slang words. From this, it can be concluded that the participants are keen to express themselves through the usage of Punjabi slang words amongst their friends. Zhou and Fan (2013) states that the usage of slang words for such a function is done, not only to stress on the identity, but also to set the participants themselves free from the psychological need for expressing their emotions, which is one of the most basic functions of language. According to Zhou and Fan (2013), profanity is one of the ways users to express their strong feelings. The participants were reported to use profanity heavily to help alleviate the nervous and stressful energy contained in them, as quoted by Zhou and Fan (2013).

5.3 Implication of Study

The current study has demonstrated the existence of slang amongst the Punjabi language speakers. Slang words not only exist in the community, they are being used extensively by the young speakers of the language. This presence of slang may have had an adverse effect on the maintenance of the language, especially since the usage of Punjabi language in Malaysia is diminishing. Given that the Punjabi language is a minority language in Malaysia, as it is spoken by a small number of Malaysian Punjabis, this is an alarming trend that is being addressed. The current study was conducted in Malaysian Punjabi Centres which are responsible for educating the young minds to speak in formal Punjabi language. Ferdinand de Saussure (1966) quoted that time changes

everything, even languages are not able to escape this universal law. Does this mean the languages need to adapt to new trends as we move into a new decade? Languages are consistently exposed to new slang words and some of these slang words do get adapted into the dictionaries. For example, a new set of words were coined by netizens due to the pandemic. Words such as “covidiot” (used for someone who ignores public health advice), “coveideo party”(refers to online hangout sessions), and “covexit” (used as reference to the strategy for exiting lockdown), and even the Corona virus has acquired new signifiers – including “the ‘rona” (Lawson, 2020).

The current study serves as an important contribution to the field of sociolinguistics, as the studies of slang on the Punjabi language are lacking. The current research was able to prove the existence of Punjabi slang words in the community of Malaysian Punjabis. The findings reported here has shed some light onto the slang words used by the youth in the three Malaysian Punjabi Education Centres. This approach will prove useful in expanding our understanding on primary and secondary school students on how and why these slang words are employed. This study provides a basis for other linguists to carry out much-detailed research on the development of slang words in the Punjabi language among the Malaysian Punjabi community in the tertiary education and also, it gives the linguists a chance to further advance the research among the Punjabi communities worldwide. This is the first study of a substantial duration, which has managed to examine the association of the slang words with various functions of the Punjabi slang words in Malaysia. The findings from this study will make several contributions to the current literature, especially to the studies on the Punjabi language, with regard to the usage of slang among the Malaysian Punjabi community in terms of functions of slang, gender and the word formation of new words.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

This research started as a preliminary work for investigating the existence of slang in the Punjabi language. One of the greatest limitations was the number of participants in the current study. A natural progression of this work would be to analyze and study the Punjabi slang words used by the teenagers and university students throughout Malaysia. A greater focus on slang words could produce interesting findings that would account more on how the speakers of the Punjabi language uses slang words.

Other researchers have conducted a number of slang studies on teenagers and university students of different languages. These studies and the current study may be used to compare and contrast the usage of Punjabi slang words by various ages and gender across other languages. Further investigation on Punjabi slang words is strongly recommended, since it has proven the existence of slang words in the Punjabi language that may be a contributing factor in the waning of formal Punjabi language. Also, further research on this topic would encourage studies on the Punjabi language in Malaysia, as these studies are lacking.

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