

**HIP HOP SLANG IN BOB MARLEY'S SONG LYRICS:  
IT'S FORM AND MEANING**

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**By**

**EKA HARDIANTO**

**1500026042**

**ENGLISH LITERATURE DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF LITERATURE, CULTURE, AND COMMUNICATION  
UNIVERSITAS AHMAD DAHLAN  
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**ABSTRACT**

This research entitled *Hip Hop Slang in Bob Marley's Song Lyrics: It's Form and Meaning*, in intended to find out the forms of hip hop slang words and to describe the meanings of hip hop slang words in Bob Marley's song lyrics.

This research belongs to qualitative research. The researcher takes the data by listening the song lyrics and finding the words that belong to hip hop slang, and note taking the words that belong to hip hop slang. The method of collecting data that the researcher uses is observation method.

The result of the research shows that the forms of hip hop slang in Bob Marley's song lyrics. There are several forms of hip hop slang words namely, the conjoined words, partial words, alternative pronunciation, and diction. The meanings of hip hop slang words can be analyzed based on the seven types of meanings, namely denotative or conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, affective meaning, reflective meaning, stylistic meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning.

**Keywords:** *Slang, hip-hop, form, meaning, song.*

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of Choosing Study

Language is the essential instrument in human life. Human cannot live without the language, both oral and written. Language is the symbols used to express ideas and feeling to others. Language has an important function to all societies who used it, because language is a way to interact one to another person. Allen (1978: 260) states that language make possible for an individual to survive in his or her society. From Allen's statement can conclude that language is used to interact with other people to fulfill their need to talk about their business and their problem.

Language is a symbol of a speech sound system that is used as a tool to communicate by the hearer. The language itself functions as a tool communication and is the most complete and effective way to convey ideas, messages, intentions, and opinions to others. The science of learning languages is called linguistics. According to Martinet (1987: 19) linguistics is the science that takes language as the object of study. In linguistics, the study of relationships and mutual influence between behavior language and social behavior are called sociolinguistics.

In the use of slang there is shortening or transfer of one or more letters in one word, changes in sound, and meaning to make it easier those from certain groups. Words and phrases in slang possible new, but it can also be an extension of the meaning of a word (Adolof 2014: 4). Some slang words are considered inappropriate because they sometimes lead to sex, violence, crime and drugs. Slang is sometimes used as indicator to assess one's social status. English slang can also be different depending on race a group of people who talk about it. Slang often found in films, short stories, even in a song.

Hip Hop is a cultural movement that began to grow around the 1970s developed by Afro-American and Latin-American communities. Hip Hop is a very dynamic blend of elements consisting of MCing (better known as rapping), DJing,

Breakdance, and Graffiti. Lately, Hip Hop elements are also colored by beatboxing, fashion, slang, and other lifestyles.

The writer is interested in researching the word of hip hop slang in Bob Marley's song lyrics because the writer found many hip hop slang words contained in Bob Marley's song lyrics. In the music of Bob Marley's lyrics he often use hip hop words and phrases. Therefore the researcher chooses this song because it has an interesting lyric and in this song used many hip hop language in the lyric. The example of hip hop slang words which are found in Bob Marley's are as follows:

Line<sup>2</sup>: "I wanna jam it with you" ("Jamming" song)

Line<sup>12</sup>: "And I hope this jam is gonna last" ("Jamming" song)

Line<sup>14</sup>: "Burnin' all pollution tonight" ("Burnin' and Lootin'" song)

From the song lyrics above, there are some sample of hip hop slang words, *Bob Marley's* changes the words or reduces a few letters. The word *wanna* is the form of the conjoined word of *want to*. And *wanna* is the conceptual or denotative meaning of *want to* play music. The word *gonna* is the form of the conjoined word of *going to*. And *gonna* is the conceptual or denotative meaning of *going to* some place. The words *burnin'* is the form of the alternative pronunciation of *burning*. And *burnin'* is the conceptual or denotative meaning of *burning* means of extreme interest or importance.

It can be concluded that there are some hip hop slang words which can be understood easily and there are some hip hop slang words which cannot be understood easily. Especially, it will differ people who are not native speakers of English. Therefore people need some guidance to understand these kinds of words.

## **B. Problem Formulation**

Based on explanation above, the researcher needs to answer some questions, as follows:

1. What are the forms of hip hop slang used in Bob Marley's song lyrics?
2. What are the meanings of hip hop slang used in Bob Marley's song lyrics?

### **C. Objective of Study**

Based on formulation of problems above, the objectives are as follows:

1. To find out the forms of hip hop slang in Bob Marley's song lyrics.
2. To describe the meanings of hip hop slang in Bob Marley's song lyrics.

### **D. Scope of the Study**

In this research, the researcher will take the data of the use of hip hop slang in the Bob Marley's song lyrics in the word and phrases. The researcher will focus on the use of hip hop slang in the Bob Marley's song lyrics based on the form and meaning.

### **E. Review of the Related Study**

There are some people who have observed the use of slang in some subjects such as the following:

First, Lastika Ary Prihandoko ( 2012 ) write an *Anlysis of Slang words Used by the Characters in 'Ramona and Beezuz' Movie*. The writer focused on conducted to investigate the types slang and the slang functions in the movie *Ramona and Beezus* movie.

Second, Dian Pangesti ( 2018 ) wrote *The Use of Slang in The Rush Hour 3*. She concern to find out the types of slang words. What slang words are used in The Rush Hour 3 Movie. The result of the research shows that the types of slang used in Rush Hour 3 Movie are the society slang and hip hop slang.

Third, Ari Hnggono ( 2011 ) *An Analysis of Slang Terms in The “American Gangster”*, A Movie by Ridley Scott. He concerns the meaning, kinds, and the reason of using slang in *American Gangster* movie directed by Ridley Scott. Through this paper, he find the research finding that there are two kinds of slang that initialized in the movie, they are society and soldier slang.

The difference of all researches and the researcher is *Hip Hop Slang in Bob Marley’s Song Lyrics, Its form and meaning* is the object of discussion. This research will focuses on analyzing the meaning of hip hop slang words that’s are used in *Bob Marley’s* song lyrics. And classifying the form of hip hop slang words that are used in *Bob Marley’s* song lyrics.

## **F. Method of Research**

### 1. Data

Subroto (1992:201), explains that data are all information or substances that are served by nature (in general meaning) which should be found or collected and selected by researcher. There are two categories of data on this research.

#### a. Main Data

In this research the main data are words and phrases found in Bob Marley’s song lyrics.

#### b. Supporting Data

Supporting data are the data that support the main data which are usually taken from book, internet sources, and other resources. This research uses information from books and internet sources to be the supporting data.

### 2. Data Source

The primary source of the data for this study was taken from the lyric of *Bob Marley's* song lyrics found in the <http://mendjenk.blogspot.com/2010/11/kumpulan-lirik-lagu-bob-marley.html>. The song lyric of “Bob Marley’s song lyrics” is considered suitable to be the source of this study because provide plenty of samples of hip hop slang words and phrases.

### 3. Method of Collecting Data

Method of collecting data is how the writer collects the data to be analyzed. The method of collecting data that the writer uses is observation method stated by Sudaryanto (1993: 133-136). In this case the researcher uses observation method to get the data. This method consists of five techniques. In this research, the researcher uses observation technique (*teknik observasi*) and note technique (*teknik catat*) to collect the data.

### 4. Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

To analyze the data, the researcher uses contextual method. According to Poedjosoedarmo (unpublished : page 20-21), the method of analyzing data which is appropriate with the sociolinguistic research is contextual method. Contextual method is a method which uses context as basic of research. Contextual method also analysis the relation between context and the object. The collected data that the researcher used in the research are qualitative data such as words and the context used by the characters in Bob Marley’s song lyrics. The researcher were interpret the meaning of hip hop slang words, classify the form of hip hop slang words.

## **THEORETICAL APPROACH AND FRAMEWORK**

### **A. Theoretical Approach**

Approach of an object means choosing the part of an object that will be studied and analyzed further, hence it can be clear to observe (Ndraha, 1981:66). In this research, the object of the study will be analyzed from semantic study too.

Semantics (Verhaar, 2001: 13) is a branch of linguistics which studies meaning. In linguistics, semantics is the subfield that is devoted to be study of meaning, as borne on the syntactic levels of words, phrases, sentences, and even larger units of discourse, meaning appears in grammar (morphology and syntax) or lexicon. So semantics can be divided into grammatical and lexical semantics. Chomsky in Wardhaugh (1986: 2) says that, in order to make meaningful discoveries about language, a linguist must try to distinguish between what is unimportant about language and linguistic behavior. The important matters concern the learn ability of all languages, the characteristics they share, and the rule that speakers apparently follow in constructing and interpreting sentence; the less important matters have to do with how individual speakers use specific utterance in a variety of ways as they find themselves in this situation or that.

## **B. Theoretical Framework**

### **1. Hip Hop Slang**

According to (Jenesis Magazine, 2009) hip hop slang music uses variety of slang terms when the hip hop itself has evolved and changed. Most of its lexicon is drawn from African American Vernacular English. Hip hop slang use of alternative pronunciation mostly drawn from AAVE, ordinary words given new meanings, new coinage and portmanteau words, and vernacular phrases.

### **2. The Form of Hip Hop Slang**

In this section, the researcher will discuss the forms of hip hop slang words in Bob Marley's song lyrics that will be discussed by the writer are only four forms. Those are: The first is the conjoined word, the second is the partial word, the third is alternative pronunciation, and the four is diction.

#### **1) The Conjoined Word**



It is the form of hip hop slang words which contains more than a word. The conjoined words mean that are combined for ease pronunciation, and to reduce the total number of syllables. Usually, this kinds of hip hop slang words contains two words which are combined a word. This form of hip hop slang words, sometime make the speakers are easier to pronounce a word. In fact the original word contains two words.

## **2) The Partial Word**

Partial words are the form of hip hop slang words in which the slang words uses part of a word to represent an entire word. Usually, the words are taken from part of an initial or final of the word. Furthermore, even though the word is only part of the original word, but the sound of the word is almost the same.

## **3) Alternative Pronunciation**

Alternative pronunciation is used to shorten, alter, or change the sound of word. It is often used to ease of rhyming or to fit into rhythm, such as placing emphasis the “O” vowel (ex. Police), while dropping the end consonants (ex. Foo). Alternative pronunciation can also be used as self-referential humor, by adopting a known variation in pronunciation used in local or regional setting, movies or popular media, dialects, accents, and etc, with the end result of an intentional adopted spelling of this pronunciation.

## **4) Diction**

Diction is the choice and use of words. A group or certain group who use the form of hip hop slang words in society usually uses certain words between the members of that group. The members will choice the words when they talk to the same members and sometimes will not use it to ones who do not belong their group.

## **3. The Meaning of Hip Hop Slang**

Djajasudarma (1999: 6) says that words have two meanings namely cognitive (denotative, descriptive) and connotative meaning. Cognitive meaning can be found in human daily life. Meanwhile, connotative meaning appears from cognitive (through cognitive) into the connotative meaning and is added with another meaning component (Djajasudarma, 1999: 9).

In addition to that, Leech in his book *Semantic* (2003: 19) divides seven types of meaning, they are conceptual meaning, associative meaning which is divided into connotative meaning, stylistic meaning, affective meaning, reflective meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning.

### **1) Conceptual or Denotative Meaning**

The conceptual meaning sometimes is defined as denotative or cognitive meaning. In the widely definition, conceptual meaning is regarded as the center factor in language communication. The main reason why conceptual meaning is placed in the center factor is that it has very complex and complicated structures in which it can be compared and related with the same structure on the phonological or syntactical level (Leech, 2003: 20). Conceptual meaning can be said the real meaning.

### **2) Associative Meaning**

The associative meaning is divided into five types of meaning, they are:

#### **a) Connotative Meaning**

According to Leech (2003: 23) connotative meaning is communicative value from one expression based on the referential thing. Moreover, the connotative meaning has an area and the conceptual meaning does not have it. Connotative meaning is relatively not stable; it means that connotative meaning often changes according to culture, time, and individual experience (Leech, 2003:24).

#### b) Stylistic Meaning

Stylistic meaning is the meaning of word which shows the social environment where the language used. The stylistic meaning is decoded from a text through human knowledge toward some dimensions and the level of language use in certain language scope. A word or utterance which is regarded as a dialect sometimes shows where the speaker comes from based on the geographical or social environment and the social relationship between the speaker and the hearer (Leech, 2003: 25-26)

#### c) Affective Meaning

A language which reflects the speaker's personal feeling, include the said is called affective meaning (Leech, 2003: 27). There are two ways to express this affective meaning namely explicitly and implicitly.

#### d) Reflective Meaning

The reflective meaning is also called double meaning from other definition. The word meaning of the certain term usually refers to other word meaning (Leech, 2003: 29)

#### e) Collocative Meaning

A collocative meaning consist of the association which is acquired by a word cause by the word meaning that appears in the environment itself (Leech, 2003: 30)

### 3) Thematic Meaning

Thematic meaning means the meaning which is communicated based on the speaker's or writer's ways in the message arrangement, especially in the word order, focus, and pressing. For instance, the active sentence sometimes has different

meaning from the passive sentence although conceptually it seems almost the same. (Leech, 2003: 33).

## ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the findings of the objectives of the study formulated in Chapter I. There are two analysis in this study, the first section discusses the forms of hip hop slang words used in *Bob Marley's* song lyrics. And the second section presents the meaning of hip hop slang in *Bob Marley's* song lyrics. It has discussed and analyzed based on the previous theories in the chapter before. There were samples of the form of hip hop slang and the meaning of hip hop slang.

### A. The Forms of Hip Hop Slang

In this section, the forms of hip hop slang word that will be discussed by the writer are only four forms. Those are: The first is the conjoined word, the second is the partial word, the third is alternative pronunciation, and the four is diction. Those are the forms of hip hop slang will be discussed briefly in this following.

#### 1. The Conjoined Word

The conjoined word is one of the forms of hip hop slang word which contain more than a word. It means that the words contain two or three words, but the words are usually only part of the word which is compounded. The examples of the conjoined words are:

- (1) “I wanna jam it with you” (“Jamming” song)

There were some samples of the conjoined word found in the song lyrics of Bob Marley's song lyrics word form like the word *wanna* is the conjoined word of *want to* which means indicating that want to play music with you.

#### 2. The Partial Word

The partial word is the use part of word to represent an entire word. And usually the words are taken from part of the word, either an initial or final part of

word. Although the words are taken from part of the words, but the sound of the words are almost the same. The examples of the partial word are:

(1) “In the ouse of the risin’ sun” (“Crisis” song)

There were some samples of the partial word found in the song lyrics of Bob Marley’s song lyrics word form like the words *ouse* in the song lyrics is the partial word of *house* that means when the rising sun in the house.

### 3. Alternative Pronunciation

Alternative pronunciation is used to shorten, alter, or change the sound of the words. Often used by for ease of rhyming or to fit into rhythm, such as placing emphasis on the ‘O’ vowel, while dropping the end consonants. And, the examples and the explanation of the alternative pronunciation will be discuss in this part.

(1) “Burnin’ all pollution tonight” (“Burnin’ and Lootin’” song)

There were some samples of the partial word found in the song lyrics of Bob Marley’s song lyrics word form like the words *burnin*’ in the song lyrics is alternative pronunciation of *burning* means that burnin’ Eye dialect spelling of burning. Inburn. Burning also means of extreme interest or importance.

### 1. Diction

Diction is the hip hop slang words usually use certain words to talk with their close friends or their members family and it will not use for the strangest. The members will choice the words when they talk to the same members and sometimes will not use it to ones who do not belong to their group. The examples the diction in hip hop slang word form is:

(1) “Ain’t no rules, ain’t no vow, we can do it anyhow” (“Jammig” song)

There were some samples of the partial word found in the song lyrics of Bob Marley’s song lyrics word form like the words *ain*’t in the sentence is the word which is used to express the negative form of *not*. It is negative form of *be* (*am*, *is*, *are*) and *not*, and it means not.

### B. The Meaning of Hip Hop Slang

In this part, the researcher will discuss the meaning of the hip hop slang words. The researcher will discuss these words based on seven types of meanings, namely denotative or conceptual, connotative, affective, reflective, stylistic, collocative, and thematic meanings. A brief description of those of meaning can be seen in the following.

### **1. The Conceptual or Denotative Meaning**

As stated before, denotative meaning is the real meaning of the word which does not contain additional meaning. The conceptual meaning sometimes is defined as denotative or cognitive meaning. In the widely definition, conceptual meaning is regarded as the center factor in language communication. There were some samples of conceptual and denotative meaning found in Bob Marley's song lyrics can be seen in the following:

(1) "They still killin' – kilin' the people" ("Crisis" song)

The word *givin'* are the samples of conceptual or denotative meaning of hip hop slang words. The words *givin'* is the conceptual or denotative meaning of *giving* that means givin' Eye dialect spelling of giving. The act of providing money for something, especially to a charity or other good cause.

### **2. The Connotative Meaning**

Connotative is the kind values and attitudes invoked by a word apart from its core meaning. Based on the language characteristics, it always changes over time and is culturally dependence. Usually, connotative meaning used the writers who wish persuade the reader, etc. The example of connotative meaning can be seen in the following.

(1) "We're jamming right straight from the JAH" ("Jamming" song)

The word *JAH* are the samples of connotative meaning of hip hop slang words. The word *JAH* is the connotative meaning of *yah* or the Rastafarian name

of God. Jah can be rendered as Jah or Yah and is short for Jehovah or Yahweh (or Yehowah) in a poetic sort of way. This shortened form of the divine name appeared 50 times in the Hebrew scriptures, 26 as Jah or Yah, and 24 as Hallelujah. The word “Hallelujah” is Greek for a Hebrew phrase. The phrase translates as a literal command to a group of people to “praise Jah,” or “Yah.” Literally, "Praise Ye Jehovah."

### 3. The Affective Meaning

Affective meaning means the word or language that reflects the speaker’s feeling toward hearers or something that is said. Such feelings or attitudes are usually negative or insincere in nature. They are normally expressed through such forms of language use as insult, flattery, hyperbole or sarcasm. The examples of the affective meaning can be seen in the following data.

- (1) “There was a *buffalo* soldier in the heart of America,” (Buffalo Soldier” song)

Sample of affective meaning found in the song lyrics, the word *buffalo* in the sentence above is included in affective meaning. This sentence belongs to the affective meaning because it comes from the feeling or emotion of the singer. The "*buffalo soldier*" referred to by Bob Marley here is black warriors in the Caribbean.

### 4. The Reflective Meanings

The reflective meanings means the meaning of word that has double meaning from other definition. Moreover, this type of meaning will be discussed in the following description.

- (1) “No, woman, no cry. Eh, *Yeah!*” (“No Woman No Cry” song)

The word *yeah* above, it appears that the speech partner responds to the expression expressed by the speaker by answering *yeah* which means emphasizing that women do not cry. Bob is actually telling his woman not to cry. Don’t cry on

what has happened as it is the past. Forget the hard times and malignant periods of your life. Move on and plan for the future.

### **1. The Stylistic Meaning**

The stylistic meaning is a piece of language which conveys about the social circumstance of t uses. The stylistic meaning is decoded from a text through human knowledge toward some dimensions and the level of language use in a certain language scope. There was no sample found in the song lyrics of Bob Marley's identified as stylistic meaning.

### **2. Collocative Meaning**

The collocative meaning consist of the associations a word acquires on account of the meaning of words which tent to occur with it. There was no sample found in the song lyrics of Bob Marley's identified as collocative meaning.

### **3. Thematic Meaning**

Thematic meaning is what is communicated by the way in which a speaker or writer organizes the message, in terms of ordering, focus and emphasis. It is often felt that an active sentence has different meaning from its passive equivalent, although their conceptual content seems to be the same. There was no sample found in the song lyrics of Bob Marley's identified as thematic meaning.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

In this chapter is divided two parts. The researcher gives some points which contain. The first part is conclusion. It deals with the result of the study discussed in the previous chapter. And suggestion is the second part which contains what the researcher suggests about this research.

### **A. Conclusion**

After analyzing of the data, the researcher concludes that the forms of hip hop slang in Bob Marley's song lyrics. The forms of hip hop slang there are four form of hip hop slang words. The first are conjoined words, is one of the hip hop slang words forms which contain more than a word. It means that the words contain two



or three words. The second are the partial words are taken from part of the word to represent an entire word. Usually, the words are taken from part of the word, either an initial or final part of the word. The third are alternative pronunciation is it has been said that alternative pronunciation is used to shorten, alter, or change the sound of the words. And the last are diction is the speakers who use the hip hop slang words usually use certain words to talk with their members and it will not use anymore to others.

Then, in describing the meaning of hip hop slang words the researcher finds that hip hop slang words contain more than one meaning. There are six types of meaning found in Bob Marley's song lyrics. Those are denotative or conceptual meaning, what is the ordinary dictionary everyday meaning of a word or expression. Connotative meaning, what is communicated by virtue of language refers to. Affective meaning, what is communicated of feelings and attitudes of the speaker or writer. Reflected meaning, what is communicated through association with another sense of the same expressions. Stylistic meaning, what is communicated of social circumstance of language use. Collocative meaning, what is communicated through association with words which tend to occur in the environment of another word. And thematic meaning is what is communicated by the way in which a speaker or writer organizes the message, in terms of ordering, focus and emphasis.

### **B. Suggestion**

Based on the findings and discussion above, the researcher hopes that this research is useful for all people who read it. The researcher would like to give some suggestions to several parties.

Student who want to know more about the forms of hip hop slang words and the meanings of hip hop slang words in Bob Marley's song lyrics. Also, they can

analyzed slang in other object such as song lyric, movie or novel. The student should pay more attention to the forms of hip hop slang words and the meanings of the hip hop slang words in another object. Also will help the readers to understand the words. Sometimes the meaning of the words are not appropriate with the sentence context, so the readers should try to understand the words carefully and accurately.

When analyzing the hip hop slang words, the researcher must understand the differences about between the forms and the meanings of hip hop slang words. After that, choose the theory that can easily to understand by the researcher so it can help them to analyze the forms and the meanings of hip hop slang words in Bob Marley's song lyrics.

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