



Students' Perception of The Use of English Slang Words In “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” Movie to Improve Vocabulary

Hardiana Budiarti

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

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Abstract

Along with the times, language changes and has many varieties. There are many varieties of language development used in everyday life. One of these language varieties is slang. This study focuses on students' perceptions of the use of English slang words in the movie "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" as a tool to improve their vocabulary. This study explores how exposure to colloquial language used in the context of teen movies affects students' vocabulary skills. This study used a qualitative method, employing Partridge's (2016) theory in analyzing the types of slang words in the film and used paired two sample. The participants of this study were 20 students of grade 7 MTs NU 12 Ki Ageng Mataram. This study used the descriptive qualitative research and the questionnaire used in this study is a closed questionnaire type and the researchers used a Likert scale to find out exactly the respondent's answer. The results of this study show that in "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" movie, there are two types of slang: Public school and society slang. The result of students' perception analysis showed that most students (95%) agreed that watching the movie helped them focus in the learning process. The findings suggest that the integration of teaching materials involving popular culture content can be an effective strategy for teaching English vocabulary among teenagers.

✉Correspondence Address:

Unnes, Sekaran, Kec. Gn. Pati, Kota Semarang, Jawa Tengah 50229

E-mail : hardianabudiarti9@students.unnes.ac.id

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INTRODUCTION

Language is used in terms of communication to convey, express ideas, desires, and feelings. According to Yule (2014), language is a set of symbols used primarily for communication. Especially in English which requires a lot of vocabulary to facilitate communication. A rich vocabulary is important in understanding English and its four primary skills, which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Richards and Renandya (2022), vocabulary has a significant impact on a learner's ability to speak, listen, read, and write in a foreign language. This highlights the importance of vocabulary in communication. Vocabulary is a key to mastering English, for learners need enough vocabulary to know the structures and functions of English. According to Barcroft et al. (2011), it refers "to all the words in a language, the entire vocabulary of a language". The important thing why students have to improve their vocabulary is because they will be able to communicate (write and speak) more clearly and use words to make people understand. In learning English, it is important to master vocabulary. The more vocabulary in English that is mastered, the easier it will be to learn and understand the foreign language. Based on Rahmawati and Anwar (2022) most language abilities require a large vocabulary. Learners or students cannot use their recently learned grammar and language functions to communicate successfully if they do not have a larger vocabulary.

However, there are several problems in the field that encourage the importance of this research. First, many researchers have conducted research on slang and then analyzed its types of slangs, but only a few slang studies have been conducted for learning media. As suggested by previous researchers, the author will fill the gap left by previous researchers by conducting research on various topics, adding variables, and different discussions in order to obtain the results of a more comprehensive study related to the use of slang to improve

students' vocabulary. This research will be useful for applying different ways to improve the English learning process for students, which can help those who conduct similar research in the future. The use of slang in the movie is interesting to discuss. Slang can make vocabulary learning more relevant and interesting for learners, especially for teenagers. According to Janosik (2005 as cited in Turnisih & Fauziah, 2022), slang is shorthand for non-standard language, and most people use it occasionally. Slang words and phrases are typically found as a result of social standards or ideals. Slang typically appears in society as a means of expression; most people choose to use it, and it's typically commonplace.

However, beyond its widespread use, slang is generally understood to be a language that frequently refers to taboo subjects. Most slang terms indicate rudeness or vulgarity. As a result, most only speak informally with those who are very near to us, such friends and neighbors (Sari et al., 2021). The word "slang" was first used to refer to the vulgar vocabulary used by particular subcultures, such as soldiers' or musicians' slang, and is said to have originated in England in the 18th century. Hartman and Stork (1972) define that slang a type of language marked by newly created and quickly evolving vocabulary, often used by young people or specific social and professional groups for internal communication, which can make it difficult for the broader speech community to understand

According to Partridge (2016), in his book *'Slang Today and Yesterday'*, the types of slang word: Cockney, public house, workmen's, trademen's, commerce, public school and universities, society, art, theatre, church. Cockney slang came from the East End of London and has gained popularity through literature, music, and movies. To get over the restrictions of the recorded language related to this topic, public house slang consists of collections of terms and phrases derived from public house life. Workmen's slang is typically used to refer to anything by another phrase that is well-known and understood by the workers.

However, slang is frequently employed in the business world by a variety of occupations, including butchers, builders, chemists, and tailors, who are thought to be the primary users of their own words. Slang generally supports agreements or discussions between committee members and their clients in the business world.

Both public and private schools, which have been around for more than a century, have two primary forms of slang: gibberish and accurate slang. Other forms of slang are hard to generalize because every school has a unique language that other schools do not use. Every social group in society has its own language that is used in social interactions and contributes to the group's unique identity. In the arts, creative terms and expressions are rapidly assimilated by the general public, however usually only superficially, with little regard for their deep meaning. The 19th century saw the emergence of theater slang, which had a big impact on every day and casual spoken English. Even the church has not escaped the influence of slang, which has long since penetrated other forums such as the senate, so that the pulpit is no longer entirely free of the elements.

On the other hand, Allan and Burridge (2006) classified slang into five categories, including fresh and creative, flippant, imitative, acronym, and clipping, in their book "Forbidden words". Slang is an informal language used by young people or in a particular social group for internal communication so the other groups will not understand. It can help students to learn terms and improve existing vocabulary.

The movie of "*Diary of a Wimpy Kid*" is a 2010 American film based on the novel of the same name by Jeff Kinney. This film tells the story of the life of a junior high school student named Greg Heffley (played by Zachary Gordon) at his new school. Greg tried in various ways to become one of the popular students at his school, but his efforts often failed for various reasons. Some slang words are found in this movie, for example, in the title itself "*Diary of a Wimpy Kid*", "wimpy" is a

slang word, that means weak and there are many other examples. Researchers was motivated to learn more about the slang found in the movie, and apply slang to the English learning process in the classroom to improve students' vocabulary. The movie can provide students with natural and authentic English. With this natural and authentic English, students can acquire a lot of vocabulary that they may not be learned and heard at school.

According to Br Simamora and Oktaviani (2020), watching English-language movies can help students learn the language and improve their vocabulary because they frequently pick up new words from the films. As students watch more English-language films, learning the language becomes easier for them since they may pick up the language through listening exercises as well as by observing the actors and actresses' facial expressions and scenes. Focused audio-visual inputs such as movies are valuable additional resources for language learners, which can help improve their vocabulary acquisition levels (Ashcroft et al., 2018). Zasrianita and Putri (2022) mention that the use of movie synopsis helps students to be more motivated, challenged and comfortable with the material presented and students are more creative and active.

The research was conducted so that readers can see the other side of slang, which can be used as a learning tool to improve vocabulary. Readers are expected to be able to review from various points of view, such as the assumption that slang is only used by the lower classes can slowly change, increasing vocabulary does not always come from formal language, and slang can be a learning media and increasing student motivation. This research discusses about improving students' vocabulary using slang sourced from the movie of 'Diary of Wimpy Kid' to improve vocabulary.

METHOD

The research method used by the researchers is qualitative. The population of this study were 7th grade students at MTs NU 12 Ki Ageng Mataram. The sample used as a sample amounted to 20 students, consisting of 9 boys and 11 girls. They were selected because they are the students who are given treatment in the process of learning English with movies to improve vocabulary. The research instruments in this study were table of type of slang word and questionnaire. The researchers used partridge's (2016) theory to determine the type of slang word. The purpose of determining the type of slang word is to simplify and adjust the word usage for students.

The researchers collected perception data with a questionnaire in the form of 10 respondent statements for students to answer. This questionnaire provided insight into students' perceptions of the use of video/film media in learning English vocabulary and how effective this method is in achieving learning objectives. One of the questionnaires on comprehension and vocabulary was useful to assess the effectiveness of the movie in helping comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. Participants may decide to respond to inquiries and supply basic personal or demographic data. The questionnaire consisted of 4 items of agreement levels on a likert scale, after the data was collected, the questionnaire data is translated into numbers and analyzed. The results were then depicted in descriptive statistics which including frequency tables and percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the research findings and explanations. The research findings are divided into two parts: types of slang words along with the analysis of slang words in "Diary of Wimpy Kid" movie and students' perceptions of using English movie to improve their vocabulary.

The types of slang words in "Diary of Wimpy Kid" movie

The researchers involved an analysis of slang words and the identification of the types of slang words. The writer has seen the movie multiple times and has noticed that it uses a lot of slang words. The writer categorized types of slang words used the theory of Partridge (2016). There are many different types of slang, including cockney, public house, workmen's, trademen's, commercial, public schools, theater, art, and church slang. The writer identified two categories of slang words in the "Diary of Wimpy Kid" movie using Partridge's hypothesis.

(1) Public School Slang

The key source of this slang is students, they are young and creative. Each school has its own special words that other schools do not know. Public school and university slang used in public schools and universities conveys a good, cheerful, materialistic, but not disgusting impression (Partridge, 2016). Then the researchers found 9 slang words that categorized as public school slang such as **morons, spurt, outta, what's up, stinks, hang out, gonna, rad and wicked**, because the use of these words is in the school area and only they understand the use of the vocabulary.

Data 1: Morons

"He's an [excellent](#) buffer between me and [these morons](#)." (In the school hallway, 00:06:52)

Morons is identified as types of public school slang. In this dialogue, Greg explains that he is a first-time student in middle school and he adds that he is not a bad kid because there are worse kids than him, namely Chirag. Morons is a word that describes people who are stupid. In the movie describes a group of children who behave badly and are considered by Greg's character as stupid children.

Data 2: Spurt

"You got kids like me who haven't hit [their growth spurt](#) yet" (In the school hallway, 00:06:33)

In this dialog, Greg explains that junior high school is the worst idea ever created,

according to Greg that junior high school children are still growing up and their appearance should not exceed their age. In dictionary translation, the word spurt means push or burst. In this movie, it is interpreted as the process of a person's body growing into adult hood.

Data 3: Outta my way

"What kind of [extracurricular](#) activities are these? **Outta** my way" (In front of noticeboard, 00:23:18)

In this dialog, Greg and Rowley are talking and then one of their friends comes and asks them to get out of the way so as not to prevent her from registering for extracurricular activities on the information board. The sentence spoken is the sentence from "got out of my way" and then spoken briefly which is usually spoken by children to fellow friends at school.

Data 4: What's up

"Hey, **what's up?**" (In the school field, 01:19:02)

In the dialog, a boy meets his friend on the school field and says "hey. What's up". The sentence is one of the greeting sentences, which is used to fellow close friends. "What's up" is the universal greeting for "How are you doing", "Greetings". "What's going on?"

Data 5: Stinks

"That really **stinks**" (In the class, 00:52:11)

In the dialog Greg and Chirag discuss about Brian Little, a student who is the school cartoonist who is on medication to treat his illness, in the dialog Greg expresses his concern for his friend. The word stink if interpreted in accordance with the dictionary then means smell, but it is interpreted as an expression of concern.

Data 6: Hang out

"I've told you, like, a [billion times](#) that guys our age say "**hang out**," not "play" (In the street, 00:17:29)

In the dialog Greg explains to Rowley, that children of their age when inviting friends to play use the word "hang out". Based on wordreference.com the word "hang out" means spend time, relax, chill or chill out.

Data 7: Gonna

"Then we're **gonna** have to bust out of here" (In the grandmother's house, 00:42:38)

In the dialog, Greg and Rowley are being chased by a group of adults then they hide in Greg's grandmother's house but the group of adults will not leave before meeting Greg and Rowley. Therefore, in the dialog Greg said that the two of them had to get out of the house. The word "gonna" spoken by Greg is the original word of "going to" which is spoken informally by Greg.

Data 8: Rad

Data 9: Wicked

"That is totally **rad! Wicked**" (In the class, 00:33:58)

In the dialog, the children are in class and the teacher is showing a motivational video to increase students' confidence. In the motivational video, a boy is performing his skills in break dancing and is praised by his friends by saying "That is totally Rad! Wicked". The word "rad" according to Collin dictionary means radical. One of the definitions of "radical" relates to innovation. In the dialog, it is interpreted as an adjective, which is "awesome". Then the word "wicked" in the dictionary means evil, in the dialog as well as "rad" is interpreted as an adjective used to praise, namely the meaning of "great".

(2) Society Slang

According to Partridge (2016), society slang expresses excitement or joy over the things and behavior of its users. It also relates to the spirit of the universe, as life is joyful or carefree over the things and behavior of its users. The distinction between slang and its users is that while slang treats solemnity and respects the vocation it serves, it rarely does so, treating it with the detached amusement that, when viewed from a distance, every human activity seems to invite. The researchers found 11 slang words in the movie Diary of Wimpy Kid based on Eric Partridge's theory, such as **wimpy, jerk, gut, bunch, cop, gross, geez, bubby, dude, freak, gotcha.**

Data 10 : Wimpy

The word "**wimpy**" is taken from the title of the movie *Diary of Wimpy Kid*. The word is interpreted as an adjective that describes someone who lacks confidence or determination. In this movie, the word "wimpy" is a slang word that describes the character who is attitude or behavior that is annoying, which describes the main character of the movie, it is Greg.

Data 11: Jerk

"Then you're a **jerk** "In the class, 00:50:23)

In the dialog, Rowley explains to Greg that the X-rays show that his hand is broken. A group of girls came and asked Rowley what happened to his hand. Seeing this atmosphere, Greg felt jealous and explained that Greg was the one who broke Rowley's hand while playing catch. Then one of the girls said an unkind sentence to Greg. The word "jerk" in the dialog is an informal word that describes people who are disliked or who treat others badly.

Data 12: Gut

"Well, you have to **trust** your **gut** and try to do the **right** thing, because it's our choices." (In the Greg's house, 00:58:34)

In the dialog, Greg asks his mother for advice about the problem he is having with Rowley. The word "gut" according to the Cambridge dictionary is a long tube in the human or animal body, where food moves during the process of digesting food. Then in the dialog "gut" is interpreted as the nature of courage and self-confidence. Therefore, the advice given by the mother asks Greg to be confident and do the right thing.

Data 13: Bunch

"but then I just **started drawing** a **bunch** of Zoo-wee **Mamas** and I felt better." (in the school hallway, 00:59:32"

The dialogue explains that Rowley experienced an unpleasant incident because he was excluded from the safety patrol but Rowley did not feel sad because he started to draw comics to feel better. The word "bunch" describes a large number or several. The word

can be interpreted the same as "a lot, much or many". From the dialog, it explains that Rowley started drawing many Zoo-we Mamas characters.

Data 14: Cop

"I saw your plates! We're **calling** the **cops!**" (in the street, 00:40:55)

In the dialog, Greg and Rowley are being judged by a group of adults driving a car during the Halloween celebration. Greg feels angry and yells that he will report them to the authorities. The word "cop" has different meanings and uses depending on the context of the conversation. In the dialog, it is interpreted as a police officer, the word "cop" in daily language is used for informal conversations.

Data 15: Gross

"I **think** it's **gross** and undignified" (at home 00:05:48)

In the dialog, Greg and his family are having breakfast together. Greg feels uncomfortable because his brother is sitting next to him using the potty. The word "gross" is an adjective describing a disgusting situation used in informal daily conversation.

Data 16: Geez

"Oh, **geez!**" (In the Greg's bedroom, 00:00:49)

In the dialog, Rodrick wakes Greg up to prepare for school. However, Greg was surprised that it was already 8am. The word "Geez" is an informal way to express surprise, disappointment, frustration, annoyance, or irritation. In the dialog, Greg expresses his surprise that it was past time to go to school.

Data 17: Bubby

The word "bubby" in the dialog is a nickname spoken by Greg's younger brother to Greg. This nickname is a call of affection towards a sibling. However, Greg felt uncomfortable with the nickname.

Data 18: Dude

"Hey, **reflector dude**, nice costume!" (In the street, 00:40:41)

In the dialog Greg and Rowley have finished stopping by houses to ask for some candies in celebration of halloween. when they walked to return home, a group of young men

shouted at them saying that sentence. According to vocabulary.com the word “dude” mean guy or man. This is a slang greeting term between men.

Data 19: Freak

“Besides, [getting crushed](#) is [better](#) than being seen with that [freak](#) job.” (In the school field, 00:12:38)

The dialog explains that Greg and Rowley were at the school field for sports lessons and they left the activity because they felt strange about the activities carried out by the PE teacher. Freak is an English vocabulary word that means strange or abnormal. According to collindictionary the word “freak” mean an event or action is one that a very unusual or extreme.

Data 20: Gotcha

“Remember what happened last year? Uhh **gotcha!**”

Gotcha is a slang contraction of "got" and "ya" (meaning "you"). Based on Collongdoctionary the word “gotcha” is used

to represent “got you” when pronounced informally.

The students' perceptions of using English movie to improve vocabulary

This part concerned students' perceptions of the use of slang words in the movie "Diary of a Wimpy Kid". This is aims to understand how students perceived and responded to the use of slang words in the context of the movie, as well as its impact on their learning and understanding of English. By analyzing students' responses, the researchers can evaluate the effectiveness of this approach in enhancing engagement and a more relevant and contextualized understanding of English.

The questionnaire contains 10 items about students' perception responses about using movie in English language learning. The data and results of the analysis are presented below:

Table 1. Students' Perceptions of Using English Movie

No	Statements	Frequency			
		SA	A	D	SD
1	English movie is fun and entertaining	15 (75%)	5 (25%)	0	0
2	I love learning new vocabulary by watching English movies	9 (45%)	9 (45%)	2 (10%)	0
3	Watching English movies improves my vocabulary mastery	6 (30%)	9 (45%)	5 (25%)	0
4	English Movie is a valuable tool for learning English	6 (30%)	13 (65%)	1 (5%)	0
5	English movies make it easier for me to remember new words	3 (15%)	12 (60%)	5 (25%)	0
6	I love it when teachers explain things using English movies	9 (45%)	11 (55)	0	0
7	Doing an exercise after watching movies is fun	7 (35%)	12 (60%)	1 (5%)	0

No	Statements	Frequency			
		SA	A	D	SD
8	Watching English movies helps me to stay focus while learning	5 (25%)	14 (70%)	1 (5%)	0
9	The exercises given by teacher increase my vocabulary mastery	5 (25%)	12 (60%)	3 (15%)	0
10	Watching English movie motivates me to improve my vocabulary	6 (30%)	10 (50%)	4 (20%)	0

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree

D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

Based on the researchers's findings in the field, it can be seen that students' perceptions regarding the use of slang words in the movie "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" obtained from the data collected from the questionnaire show the majority of students (75%) strongly agree that video/film media makes learning English more entertaining and fun. According to Br Simamora and Oktaviani (2020), movie can be a good way to learn English for several of reasons, including: the movie has a unique and interesting value, it teaches students how to pronounce and balance facial expressions, it provides a series of lessons that explain processes, and it has sounds and pictures that make learning simple.

Students' perceptions of Vocabulary Learning Preferences showed that 90% of students (45% strongly agreed and 45% agreed) enjoyed learning vocabulary through watching English movies, indicating that this method was favored by most students. The results of this study are supported by previous research which showed that watching movies in the English language can help students remember more vocabulary because they are enjoy hearing and seeing the words in the movie (Br Simamora & Oktaviani, 2020).

Almost half of the students (45%) felt that watching movies helped them understand and retain a lot of vocabulary and this result is similar to that of ability memorize vocabulary where 75% of students found that the film helped them memorize vocabulary easily. The results of this

study are also supported by previous research according to Ashcroft et al. (2018), showed that focused audio-visual inputs such as movies are valuable additional resources for language learners, which can help improve their vocabulary acquisition levels. The results of the effectiveness of Video/Film showed that most students (95%) agreed that video/film is more appropriate for their English learning, confirming the practical benefits of the approach. Therefore, it can increase students' enthusiasm in English by using media, such as movies, in the English teaching and learning process (Sari & Sugandi, 2015). The results of the teacher's explanation about learning English vocabulary through watching English movies showed that all students were happy with the teacher's explanation regarding learning vocabulary through movies. Due to the fact that watching movies provides students with more than just engaging visuals, they can also acquire and understand life lessons from the activities and behavior.

Results from students' perceptions showed that 95% of the students felt that the written assignment became more interesting after learning using movies, indicating increased interest and motivation in the academic task. This identifies that well-chosen movie materials can enhance students' language learning process and increase their motivation to learn the target language by implying appropriate pedagogy (Kabooaha, 2016). Most students (95%) agreed that watching the movie helped them focus in the

learning process, indicating that this media can improve concentration and 85% of students felt that the assignments given by the teacher helped them in vocabulary learning.

The result of learning motivation showed that 80% of students were motivated to learn English vocabulary through watching movies. Motivation can arise from students due to internal factors that encourage a person to fulfill their basic needs or ambitions. According to Mapiliana (2019), a form of motivation having the ability to force someone to perform in a way that achieves their goals. Students that are motivated will enjoy the work in and of itself, as well as the feeling of achievement that comes from finishing or even just starting the assignment (Episiasi et al., 2022). This means that students are motivated to learn English vocabulary through watching movies to fulfill students' basic needs in order to increase vocabulary and give them the ability to complete English learning tasks.

Table 2. The acquisition of questionnaire value for each student

No	Score	No	Score
1	65	11	85
2	95	12	90
3	92.5	13	70
4	85	14	62.5
5	67.5	15	80
6	90	16	82.5
7	85	17	87.5
8	90	18	92.5
9	65	19	75
10	80	20	82.5

Student questionnaire score calculation formula:

Score = $\frac{\text{Score received} \times 100}{\text{Maximum score}}$

Table 3. Average acquisition of student perception questionnaires

Rerata	32.45	81.125
Minimal	25	62.5
Maximal	38	95
Std	4.097174893	10.24293723
Var	16.78684211	104.9177632

The result of the questionnaire on students' perception of the used "*Diary of Wimpy Kid*" movie for English vocabulary learning is 81.125 with the highest value of 95 and the lowest value of 62.5. The researchers grouped the values in a certain range to see a clearer distribution: 60-69: 3 students, 70-79: 2 students, 80-89: 10 students, 90-100: 5 students. The majority of students scored in the range of 80-89, indicated a positive perception towards the use of movies for English vocabulary learning. The used of movie for English vocabulary learning was positively received by the students and proved to be effective for most of them.

Table 4. t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means of student perception

	SCORE	SK-B
Mean	81.125	0
Variance	104.9177632	0
Observations	20	20
Pearson		
Correlation	#DIV/0!	
Hypothesized		
Mean		
Difference	0	
df	19	
t Stat	35.41972591	
P(T<=t) one-tail	4.06684E-19	
t Critical one-tail	1.729132812	
P(T<=t) two-tail	8.13369E-19	
t Critical two-tail	2.093024054	

Based on the results above, the average value of students' perceptions is high (81.125), indicating that students generally have a very positive perception of the use of movies as a tool for learning English vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

The types of slang word used in the "Diary of Wimpy Kid" movie, slang words are present in the film and frequently appear in the majority of the scenes. The results show that slang words of the movie influenced by some of the type of slang of Partridge's theory (2016). There are two types of slang word used in the "*Diary of Wimpy Kid*" movie. They are public school and society slang. Students' Perception of Learning Media of "*Diary of a Wimpy Kid*" movie, it can be concluded that with the utilization of learning media in the learning process, students' perception of learning media is very diverse. The use of English language movies, such as "*Diary of a Wimpy Kid*," is proven to be effective in increasing students' engagement, understanding, and motivation in learning English vocabulary. Survey results show that students feel more entertained, focused and interested in this learning method. However, it is important to continue to evaluate and adapt this approach to suit the needs of all students.

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