

Analyzing the Type and Function of Slang in “One of Us is Lying”: A Novel by Karen M. McManus

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Article Info

Article history:

Received: 17 July 2025

Revised: 29 January 2026

Accepted: 29 January 2026

Keywords:

Keywords: Slang, types and functions, One of Us is Lying.

ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the types and functions of slang words in novel “One of Us is Lying” by Karen M. McManus. The researcher focuses the study on the One of Us is Lying by using theory from Allan and Burridge (2006). In this research, the researcher uses descriptive qualitative approach. The researcher used instrument of table to classify and identify the data. The results of data showed 36 cases of types and 89 cases of functions of slang words in “One of Us is Lying”. First results of the analysis that has been carried out, imitative slang is the most dominant slang used by various characters in the novel. This is because the use of slang in the novel "One of Us is Lying" is influenced by various individual and social factors. Then, second results of the analysis, the slang to initiate relax conversation function is the most often used function by characters in novels. This shows that slang plays an important role as an informal communication tool used to break the atmosphere, create intimacy, and build social relationships between characters. Thus, it can be concluded that the function of starting a casual conversation makes slang users sound more familiar, relaxed, and in accordance with the typical communication style of teenagers in everyday life.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language includes not only formal language as standard, but also informal language such as slang. Slang is a colloquial language that is often used in informal contexts, particularly in daily conversation. Slang is often used to show the social identity of a group, which provides a sense of togetherness between the members of the group. However, due to its informal and often changing nature, the meaning of slang often differs from the standard word in formal language, making the listener feel confused (Ardiana et al. 2022). English slang is currently used by many people, especially by young generation. They used slang in daily conversation, both in speaking and writing. English slang is currently used by many people, especially by young generation. They used slang in daily conversation, both in speaking and writing. Slang is not used in formal contexts. According to Pei et al. (2019), slang is informal language that is created by a group of people in certain communication. Slang is only used in a group, such as young generation, because the meaning of slang is usually only understood by the group of people. People in an out group sometimes have difficulty understanding the slang meaning of slang that is used. According to Clair (1990) as cited in Jayanthi et al. (2022), People use slang when they are in a familiar social setting where they are at ease and interacting with other people. Slang is commonly used in informal situations, such as in everyday conversations or within certain social groups. Slang often appears in spoken language and is a way for a person to express creativity and uniqueness in communicating. In addition, slang also serves as an indicator that a person has a close relationship with their

group or listeners. In the context of teenager novels, the use of slang not only serves as a means of informal communication, but also as a form of expression of the characters' social identities. In the novel "One of Us is Lying", the language used is informal everyday language and reflects the speech style of today's teenagers. The language used by the characters is often casual and easy to understand. In the novel "One of Us is Lying", the language used is informal everyday language and reflects the speech style of today's teenagers. The language used by the characters is often casual and easy to understand. The use of slang such as gonna, wanna, gone, what's up describes the relaxed and expressive everyday interactions between characters. Each character has their own speaking style, which helps to illustrate their background and relationships. Therefore, the use of informal language, such as slang in this novel is very relevant to analyse how this slang functions in the social life of the Community, especially teenagers. This research holds both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, it contributes to sociolinguistic studies by exploring slang as a tool for informal communication in teenage novels. Practically, it helps readers, writers, and educators understand the use and function of slang in everyday interactions. Several previous studies have investigated slang in literary works and films, focusing on its types, functions, and impact on character relationships. Nasution et al. (2021) revealed that slang builds solidarity among characters, while Ramadhan and Jumanto (2023) focused on slang translation in the novel Shine. Abidin (2021) examined the types and reasons for slang use in The Boss Baby script, and Oktafiana et al. (2023) analyzed slang meanings in the film Spiderman: No Way Home based on social, intellectual, and emotive categories. Although these studies provide valuable insights, none have specifically analyzed the types and functions of slang in Karen M. McManus's novel One of Us Is Lying. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by exploring how slang is used by the characters in the novel to convey social and emotional meanings, contributing to a deeper understanding of character interactions and language use in young adult literature. Based on the background above, this research aims to analyze the and function of slang in "One of Us is Lying": A Novel by Karen M. McManus.

2. METHOD

This study identified the types and functions of slang words used in Karen M. McManus's novel "One of Us is Lying" using descriptive qualitative approach. According to Cresswel & Cresswel (2018), the purpose of qualitative research was to investigate and comprehend how people or group understand a social or human issue. It means that qualitative research focuses on how people or groups see and understand the events that surround them, as well as how they influence how people perceive and comprehend many facets of social, cultural, and emotional life. The descriptive qualitative is the most effective research approach to dug deeper into the understanding of social phenomena. With this approach, the researcher can provide detailed descriptions of individual experiences, behaviors, or views in a given context, with a focus on factual or narrative descriptions (Furidha, 2023). The novel "One of Us is Lying" by American author Karen M. McManus is the object of this investigation. This novel tells the stories of five Bayview High School students, namely Simon, Bronwyn, Nate, Addy, and Cooper who are trapped in a joint detention. When Simon died after drinking from a contaminated glass, the investigation revealed that his death may have been a premeditated murder. Every student has a dark secret that can ruin their reputation, and with Simon as the secret exposer through his gossip app, they become the main suspects. In the midst of a demanding teenage life, the book examines topics of friendship, identity, and the fallout from one's actions. In this research, the analysis focused on five main characters, as they played an important role in making a significant contribution to the exploration of identities, secrets, and relationships between characters. This analysis covered the entire content of the novel, with the main focus being on the interaction or dialogue involving the five characters. The instrument that used in this research was in the form of a classification table. Through the classification table, the researcher classified and identified the types and functions of slang words used by the main character in the novel "One of Us is Lying" by Karen Mc. Manus based on the theory from Allan and Burridge (2006). To collect and analyze the data, the researcher first read and identified slang words in the novel One of Us Is Lying by Karen M. McManus. These slang words were then examined based on the theory of Allan and Burridge (2006). The analysis was carried out collaboratively by the researcher and co-researcher over several stages: identifying, classifying, and determining the types and functions of slang used by the main characters. The process included individual analysis, collaborative classification, and final interpretation, conducted over a total period of approximately three weeks. This systematic approach ensured a thorough examination of the slang's role within the novel's character interactions. In this research, a co-researcher was involved to assist in the data analysis process, particularly in identifying and interpreting the types and functions of slang in the novel One of Us Is Lying. The co-researcher helped verify the collected data to ensure accuracy, identify overlooked patterns, and provide additional perspectives. This collaboration aimed to enhance the objectivity, reliability, and validity of the research findings through joint analysis, cross-checking, and constructive feedback.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The researcher discussed the findings and provide explanations of the results. The results of the research are designed to answer research questions, including the types and functions of slang used by the main characters in the novel "One of Us is Lying" by Karen M. McManus. The researcher used an instrument in the form of a table to collect and classify the data found. Based on the data collecting results, the main characters in Karen M. McManus's novel "One of Us Is Lying" employ five different types and seven slang functions, which are examined using Allan and Burridge's (2006) theory. The first results of the data analysis found that there were 89 cases of slang words used by the main character in the novel "One of Us is Lying" by Karen Mc. Manus. The main character uses the slang terms in a variety of contexts, and some of them show along repeatedly. However, if calculated based on the type of slang words without counting repeated slang words, then there are 36 slang words. Of the 36 cases of slang words found, there are 5 types of slang words based on the theory of Allan and Burridge (2006). There are the data types of slang words found in the novel "One of Us is Lying" by Karen M. McManus.

1. Fresh and Creative

According to Allan and Burridge (2006), fresh and creative slang is a new vocabulary that emerges from the creativity of its speakers. This vocabulary can come from old words that are modified or new terms that are not yet known. The researcher found 9 data of fresh and creative slang types in the novel, there are: *heads up, punked, dude, creep, hooking up, hang out, hooked up, freaked, and guys*.

2. Flippant

Based on the theory of Allan and Burridge (2006), flippant is a type of slang that is formed from two or more words that are combined and produce a new meaning that is different from the actual meaning. The researcher found 5 data of flippant slang types in the novel, they are: *what the hell, bullshit, goddamn, the hell and shut the hell up*.

3. Imitative

Based on the theory of Allan and Burridge (2006), imitative is a type of slang that mimics words in standard English or combining two different words. The researcher found 14 data of acronym slang types in the novel, they are: *gonna, dunno, yeah, kinda, whatcha, gotta, nope, yup dang, what's up, shut up, fuck, damn, hang up, and shit*.

4. Acronym

Based on the theory of Allan and Burridge (2006), acronym is a type of slang formed from an acronym that uses the initial letter of every word or term. The researcher only found 1 data of acronym slang type in the novel, they are: *FYI*.

5. Clipping

Based on the theory of Allan and Burridge (2006), clipping is a slang phrase that arises when a word is abbreviated by removing one or more letters but maintaining the same meaning. The researcher found 6 data of clipping slang types in the novel, they are: *gettin', chokin', somethin', gon', goin', and hopin'*. The second result of the data, the researcher applies Allan and Burridge's (2006) theory to classify the function of slang phrases in Karen McManus's novel "One of Us is Lying." There are the data types of slang words found in the novel "One of Us is Lying" by Karen M. McManus.

1. To address

Slang users usually use slang to greet other users to create a more familiar atmosphere and also strengthen their social bonds. The use of slang in this case reflects the closeness of their relationship, where slang becomes a link to express a sense of familiarity. The researcher found 8 data functions of to address in the novel, they are: *heads up, dude, what's up 5x occurrence, and goin'*.

2. To humiliate

Slang users tend to express feelings of displeasure or dislike towards someone or something by mocking. This ridicule serves to express emotions sharply and create distance with someone being ridiculed. The

researcher found 4 data functions of to humiliate in the novel, they are: *yeah, shit, goddamn, and shut the hell up.*

3. To initiate relax conversation

Slang users who have a close relationship with other users tend to use slang to create a relaxed atmosphere. These slang words make interactions or conversations feel more comfortable, reduce tension, and strengthen intimacy. The researcher found 57 data functions of to initiate relax conversation in the novel, they are: *guys, gonna 7x occurrence, gettin', chokin', somethin' 2x occurrence, gon', dunno 3x occurrence, yeah 27 occurrence, hooked up, freaked, hang out, kinda 4x occurrence, FYI, damn, whatcha, nope, gotta, hopin', and yup.*

4. To form intimate atmosphere

The use of slang can be effective way to strengthen relationship between people who do not know each other. By using slang terms, interaction becomes more friendly, so it can reduce social distancing. The researcher found 1 data function of to form intimate atmosphere in the novel, they are: *hooking up.*

5. To express impression

Slang users often use slang to express their views, both positively and negatively on something. The use of slang allows them to give a clearer picture of the feelings they want to express. The researcher found 5 data functions of to express impression in the novel, they are: *what the hell, gonna, dunno, creep, and the hell.*

6. To reveal anger

Slang users who have a close relationship with other users tend to use slang terms to denounce others rather than using formal language. The researcher found 12 data functions of to reveal anger in the novel, they are: *punked, bullshit, what the hell 2x occurrence, shut up 2x occurrence, goddamn, dang, fuck and damn.*

7. To show intimacy

Conversation with strangers typically include speakers using formal language. However, while chatting to friends, they prefer to utilize slang to indicate the intimacy of their social interactions. The researcher found 2 data functions of to initiate relax conversation in the novel, they are: *hang up 2x occurrence.*

Discussion

Based on the results of data analysis for the first research question, the type of imitative slang is the most dominant found in the novel "One of Us Is Lying". This is probably because the setting of the novel tells the story of lives of contemporary American teenagers, so the use of slang by the main character reflects the simple and fast paced style of adolescence. The dominance of slang words shows that the main characters use imitative slang in interactions to create a relaxed and informal impression. In this novel, the use of imitative slang serves to strengthen the relationship between the main characters, who are initially not close but become more familiar after they experience a conflict together in a detention room. Therefore, imitative slang not only plays a role as a means of communication between characters, but also as a means to build social closeness between characters. In addition, Fresh and creative slang is the second most common data found after imitative slang. This is probably because the main characters want to show their group identity and show the creative speech style of today's teenagers. Some types of clipping slang are also found in the dialogs made by some of the main characters in the novel One of Us is Lying. The reason why some of the main characters use this type of slang may be because it is practical and commonly used by teenagers today. Although the use of clipping slang does not really show the emotionality of the main characters, the use of clipping slang makes its users feel relaxed when speaking, especially in informal situations. In addition to several types of slang that have been described previously, flippant slang is also found and used by the main characters in the novel although the number is not too much. The small number of flippant slang found may be because the novel tells the mystery of the death of one of the main characters, which is a serious conflict. The type of flippant slang used by some of the main characters is quite rude. This is because they come from different backgrounds and each of them has personal conflicts. Acronym slang is the least used type of slang by the main characters in One of Us is Lying. This is probably because the novel tells the mystery of the death of one of the main characters, where the atmosphere in the story is full of pressure and emotions. This type of acronym slang does not really show the emotions of the main characters who are facing serious conflicts. Then for the second research question, the function of slang to initiate relaxed conversation is the dominant function found in the novel "One of Us Is Lying". This shows that some of the use of slang in the novel is used to create a relaxed, informal, and close relationship between the main characters. According to Allan and Burridge (2006), this function allows the speaker to feel more comfortable in interacting. In the novel "One of Us Is Lying" the four main characters,

namely Bronwyn, Nate, Addy and Cooper are high school students who live in social pressure, their personal conflicts, and the mystery of the death of their friend, namely Simon who is also one of the main characters. Therefore, the use of relaxed slang becomes a way of communicating to balance the tense atmosphere and show the close relationship between the main characters. The function to reveal anger is the second most common function after the function to initiate relax conversation. This is probably because the storyline is quite tense. The four main characters become the main suspects because they were in the same room when Simon died. After Simon's mysterious death, the four of them are constantly interrogated by lawyers and the police. In addition, they are also under pressure because of their personal problems that are also revealed over time. Therefore, they often use the slang function to reveal anger. They try to express their annoyance, emotions and anger directly by using casual language, such as slang words. In addition, some to address functions are also found in *One of Us is Lying*. The main characters used this type of slang function probably because they were accused of being suspects in Simon's death in the detention room. After the incident, they often met and discussed to uncover the mystery of Simon's death. Therefore, when they have a meeting or accidentally meet, some of the main characters use slang words in order to greet each other. In addition, they use the function of slang to address to show their close relationship as friends. The function of slang to express impression is also found in the novel *One of Us is Lying*. This may happen because some of the main characters sometimes feel surprised by the facts they face. Like Bronwyn who was very surprised when she learned the fact that her brother Maeve was the admin of Simon's tumblr account. The function of slang to express impression also shows expressions of disappointment, fear and amazement at something they experience. The function of slang to humiliate is also found in *One of Us is Lying*, although the number is small. The main characters use this type of slang function probably because they want to express their dislike for something they face or experience. They use slang words in order to insult something that they consider bad. The function to show intimacy is also found in *One of Us is Lying* although the number is very small. This is probably because some of the main characters like Nate and Bronwyn have a very close relationship. They use the function of slang to show intimacy to show their very close relationship and also to show their care for each other.

Lastly, the function to form intimate atmosphere is the least used by the main characters in the novel. This is probably because the main characters were not close in the beginning. However, after the incident of Simon's death in the detention room, and the four main characters became suspects, then they used the slang function to form intimate atmosphere so that their interactions became more friendly.

4. CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the types and functions of slang used by the main characters in Karen M. McManus's novel *One of Us Is Lying*, based on Allan and Burridge's (2006) theory. The findings revealed 36 types and 89 functions of slang, with imitative slang being the most dominant, reflecting the fast-paced and expressive communication style of American teenagers. The most common function was initiating relaxed conversation, showing slang's role in building social bonds and casual interactions among peers, while the function to form an intimate atmosphere was less frequent, emerging mainly after shared conflicts among characters. For future research, it is recommended to expand the scope by examining slang use in other media such as films, music, or social media, which play significant roles in spreading slang among youth, and to apply or combine different theories

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