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Translating Slang Across Time: A Comparative Analysis of 1990s and Contemporary Meanings in Home Alone 2: Lost in New York.

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ABSTRACT
Language plays an important role as a means of communication, and its form is constantly changing in line with social and cultural developments. One of the most dynamic forms of language change is slang, which generally emerges from the creativity of the younger generation and is often seen in popular media such as films. This study aims to analyze the translation of slang in the film Home Alone 2: Lost in New York (1992) through three main focuses: (1) classifying slang based on Partridge's theory (1954), (2) analyzing errors in the translation of slang from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL), and (3) comparing the meaning of slang diachronically between 1990 and 2025. This study uses a qualitative method with a content analysis approach. Data was collected by watching the film, identifying slang in the dialogue, classifying it, and then comparing its meaning using Urban Dictionary and Oxford Dictionary. The results of the study show 16 slang data with the categories of Society Slang (50%), Colloquialism (31%), and Metaphorical Slang (19%). In addition to finding several translation errors, this study also shows that there has been a shift in the meaning of slang over time, with some even losing their relevance. This study emphasizes the importance of diachronic awareness in translating slang so that its meaning and function remain historically and culturally accurate.
Keywords: slang, translation, Home Alone 2, Partridge's theory, subtitles.

INTRODUCTION

People are naturally social and constantly to connect with others. When people connect, they need something to help them talk to each other, and that thing is language. This tool ensures them to effective exchange the information each other. Language is a way of talking that is organized with rules, including grammar and words.

As time goes on, language changes a lot. The advent of the digital age has ushered in a new era of language evolution (Nabilah & Adika, 2025), which is clearly visible in the rapid development of slang. and we can easily witness by how fast language change. One of the most significant changes is about slang. Slang is a type of language that comes from young people being creative when they hang out and become friends (Hualai, 2017; Keraf, 1994). We can see slang being used in society, like in movies. So, slang is not just a part of society, but also a way for groups to show who they are. This means translators need to be able to know slang and understand how it changes over time.

Movies are not only for people to enjoy. They also show how slang keeps changing as the years go by. Translators are very important for connecting not just different languages, but also different cultures (Maknun et al., 2022; Rachmawati, 2014). This is especially true when translating slang in movies. Translators have to make sure that the slang in movies sounds like a natural conversation.

Many studies have been done. Some of them had similarity studied purpose. Such as (Khofifah, 2023) that focus sorting it into two kinds slang such as Primary slang and secondary slang in "Spider-Man: No Way Home" movie. While (Permana, 2022) underline to description of how language used, especially slang. An equivalent of translation related among ST and TT. In other side, (Situmorang & Herman 2021) focus on used Zhou & Fan's (2013) theory on the function of slang and only found four types of slang in the movie Charlie's Angels. The studies mentioned above found that researchers had done some work on how slang is classified, used, function, and also sorting slang by equivalent of translation slang from ST and TT. However, none of the studies look at how slang is translated based on the time (diachronic) and culture it comes from.

Based from the studied which mention about, this research aims to fill the research gap by focusing on slang subtitle within movie while considering the time and culture it comes from. Like the theory said before, language always changes and evolves over time. The researcher question are as follows:

1. To classified slang by Patridge theory (1954)
2. To analyze if there are any mistakes in how slang is translated in the movie Home Alone 2 (Lost in New York)
3. To compare the meaning of slang from 1990 to 2025.

The movie was chosen as 1992 movie with family background genre. It provides a relevant temporal context for equivalent and has not previously investigated from this comparative translation perspective. It is hoped that this study will help translators and other researchers better understand how slang changes as time passes.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study used a Qualitative Method with a Content Analysis approach. According to Sugiyono (2018), qualitative research is based on post positivism philosophy. This type of research looks at things as they naturally are, and the research plays an important role. The data will show as table and capture of the scene. The main focus of this study is to understand and analyze the language used in the film Home Alone 2: Lost in New York, specifically looking at slang found in the characters' dialogue. The way slang is grouped is based on the ideas of Eric Partridge (1954/2004). He suggested three main categories for classifying slang: Society Slang, Metaphorical Slang, and Colloquialism. Colloquialism is used to compare with original slang and everyday conversation.

The data for this study is collected and analyzed with the following steps:

1. Watching the whole movie.
2. Making note to all the dialogues who provide slang.
3. The data then sorted into the categories set by Partridge helping by Chatgpt and will show as a chart.
4. The meaning of the slang was studied diachronic, from the 1990s to 2025 by compare the meaning with table. The goal was to see if there were any changes in how the slang was used or what it meant.
5. Once the slang was identified, the meaning was examined in the context of the dialogues and subtitles in the film by using table who show TSa, Tsu and the explanation of different year.
6. Then, it compared between the 1990s and 2025, using urban dictionaries as a reference.

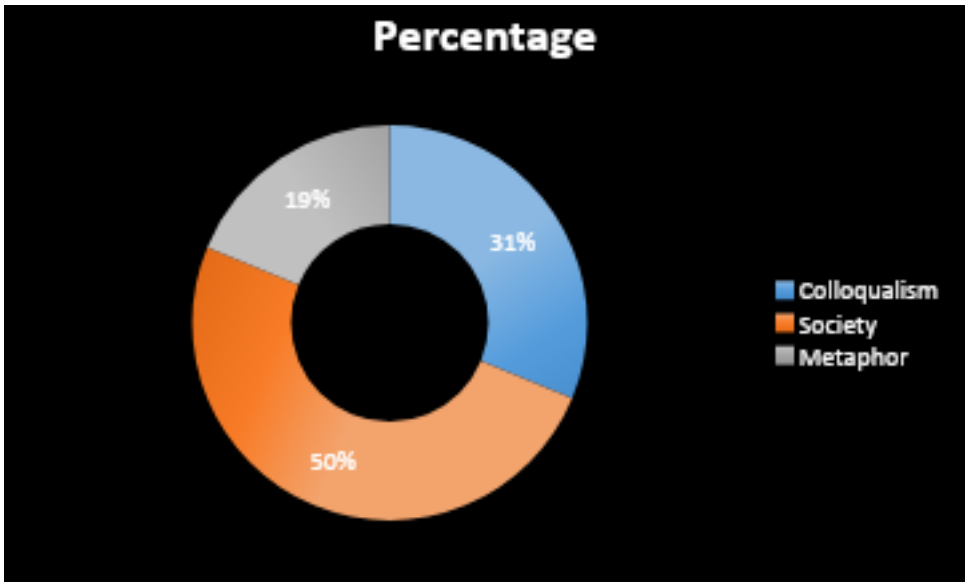
Taking this approach makes it much easier to see if the slang has shifted in meaning, changed its function, or just become a bit dated over time. This is really important because, when trying to get a grip on what a text actually means, 'contexts could determine how words are used within a sentence' (Aziz, K., & Adika, D. 2024). Instead of just looking at these terms in isolation, we have to consider how they're put together in a sentence, as this is what really shapes their function and, in the end, their actual meaning.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Home Alone 2 is a comedy film that follows the story of a young boy, Kevin McCallister, who accidentally boards the wrong plane on his family's Christmas holiday. Instead of flying to Florida, he ends up in New York. As highlighted in this study, the film contains various slang expressions used by different characters throughout the storyline. Based on research question, there are three finding in this research, which is: Classified slang by Erick Patridge theory (1954); Analyze the mistake within the slang translate and Compare slang meaning by diachronic way

1. Slang classification viewed by Patridge theory

The researchers found 16 slangs in Home Alone 2 (Lost in New York) Movie. The data were collected and classified by theory from Patridge and show by picture. Based on the classification results, three types of slang with different percentages were found. The first is Slang Society, which dominates with 8 data (50%). This shows that most of the slang that appears in the film is related to social life and interactions between characters. The second is Colloquialism, with 4 data (31%), meaning that there is slang used to express the emotions felt by the characters, such as 'geez, damnit.' The third is Metaphorical slang, which only appears 3 data (19%) in the film. This concludes that the film Home Alone emphasizes simple interactions rather than metaphors.



Picture 1. Percentage the total Slang in Home Alone 2 (Lost in New York)

This point concerns the identification of 16 slang items found in *Home Alone 2* (1992). These were categorized into three groups based on Partridge's theory: Society Slang, such as *bro, bruh,* and *hang out*; Metaphorical Slang, such as *trout sniffer* and *suck up to*; and Colloquialism, including *damnit, geez,* and *bingo*. These three categories were selected because slang is highly fluid and tends to change over time along with the meaning used in communication. This finding aligns with Chair and Leonie (2010), who argue that changes in slang are closely influenced by the context in which communication takes place. Although some slang carries slightly rude connotations, these expressions are widely known and commonly used in everyday interaction.

2. **Errors within the slang translation.**

After classifying the slang, the researchers found several errors in the translation of the film. The errors noted in this translation include the translation from the source language to the target language. The researcher took a few data as example and show on Table.1

Table 1. Slang comparation from movie dialog (SL) with subtitel (TL)

SL	TL
You cooking frankie	Kau memasak frankie
Sick	Astaga
Howedo	Halo
Bingo	Bingo
Smoochy	Berpacaran
Flush out	Keluar/Kabur
Big Sissy	Banci besar

The second point of discussion focuses on translation errors involving slang, as several slang expressions in the film were not rendered appropriately in the subtitle. Such as:



SL:You cooking frankie!

TL:Kamu memasak frankie!

The term *"frankie"* in this context does not refer to someone cooking at all. In the scene, the character is actually in the bathroom singing while Kevin tries to take his tie. This clearly shows that the subtitle fails to capture the intended slang meaning, resulting in a lack of equivalence between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL). Such a discrepancy aligns with the argument that a significant shift in meaning often occurs due to the change or omission of stylistic elements during translation (Yuliarta et al 2025). Consequently, this outcome is in contrast to the findings of Permana (2022), whose study generally demonstrated a high level of equivalence in slang translation. In addition, a decline in translation quality was also found in the rendering of expressive slang, such as:



SL: Watch it kid

TL: Permisi, Nak!

This ultimately results in the failure to preserve the specific function of slang as examined by Situmorang and Herman, who adopted Zhou and Fan's (2013) framework of slang functions. In this regard, the emotional weight behind the original slang doesn't quite come across in the translation, which ends up weakening the pragmatic force of the dialogue. This failure really highlights a lack of dynamic equivalence the principle of delivering the same meaning and emotional impact as the original text (Andiyani et al. 2025). It's clear that this issue stems from overlooking the temporal dimension. While Khofifah (2023) did a good job of classifying slang structurally, her analysis is strictly synchronic, meaning it misses how these expressions shift over time.

3. **Slang meaning comparation by diachronic way**

The next step, researches would compare the slang meaning by diachronic way. According to the Oxford Learning Dictionary, the term *diachronic* refers to something that develops or changes over time, particularly in relation to language. In this study, the data were examined by comparing how the slang found in the film was used and defined across different periods. To do this, the researcher relied on two online dictionaries. Urban Dictionary was used to trace the meaning of the slang as it was understood in the 1990s, while Oxford Dictionary was consulted to identify how the same slang is defined in the present day. This approach allows the researcher to see whether the slang has undergone shifts in meaning, changes in function, or even fallen out of use over time.

Table 2. Slang comparation by using Online Dictionary

ST	TT	The Meaning in 1990 by using urban dictionary	The Meaning in 2025 by using Oxford dictionary
Geez	Astaga	Short for Jesus. Used by Christians who don't want to "use the Lord's name in vain" even though it's just as bad.	No match
Damnit	Sialan	A phrase used when pissed.	A swear word that people use to show that they are annoyed, disappointed, etc.
Kiddo	Anak kecil	Name for calling someone a kid. Someone who is most likely younger than you.	Used when speaking to a friend or a child
Bingo	Bingo	An exclamation used when you finally work something out, or an idea/solution suddenly comes to mind. Also said when you discover something.	A game in which each player has a card with numbers on. Numbers are called out in no particular order and the first player whose numbers are all called out, or who has a line of numbers called out, wins a prize.

The third discussion then compares the current translation of slang, interpreted using the Oxford Dictionary, with the slang meanings from 1990 sourced from the Urban Dictionary, as presented in Table 2. The selected terms were chosen because they are highly recognizable and frequently used, which allows the researcher to conclude that these terms were relatively popular slang expressions at the time.

The term *geez* is only defined in the Urban Dictionary, and no equivalent meaning exists in the Oxford Dictionary. This suggests that language naturally undergoes change to the extent that older slang expressions eventually fall out of use and may disappear over time.

In contrast, the terms *kiddo* and *damnit* show a clear consistency in meaning across both dictionaries. Their definitions in 1990 and in 2025 remain largely identical, indicating no semantic change or loss. Meanwhile, the word *bingo* demonstrates a highly notable shift: in the Urban Dictionary, *bingo* refers to an exclamation used when someone

suddenly gets an idea or realization; however, in the Oxford Dictionary, it no longer carries this connotation and instead refers to a recreational game.

This comparison clearly shows that one of the slang terms, *bingo*, has undergone semantic shift and possibly even obsolescence in its earlier meaning. This finding indicates that earlier studies still have limitations in accounting for lexical dynamics across time. The present study also supports previous research by Situmorang and Herman (2021) and by Permana (2022), both of them explain how slang meanings can shift, change, or disappear entirely due to temporal factors. This research therefore fills a conceptual gap by arguing that translation strategies for classic film slang must be grounded in diachronic awareness in order to produce translations that are historically and functionally accurate.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion presented in the previous section, this study concludes that a number of slang expressions in *Home Alone 2* were mistranslated. The use of slang in the film is predominantly associated with *Society slang*, as it reflects the social and generational speech patterns of the 1990s. Beyond mistranslation, the analysis also identified inaccuracies in the rendering of emotionally driven or expressive slang, as well as indications that several slang items have undergone semantic shift, change of meaning, or even fallen out of contemporary use.

These observations align with Adolf Haulai's 2017 theory, which states that slang evolves as a result of young people's linguistic creativity. This highlights the inherently dynamic nature of slang: its meaning can shift, develop, or disappear altogether over time. This research provides a reference point for language students who wish to explore slang further. It is recommended that subsequent research investigate a comparison of slang usage between Generation Z and Generation Alpha.

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