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An Analysis of Colloquial Language of The Main Character by Lara Jean in *To All The Boys I've Loved Before* Movie

(Analisis Bahasa Daerah Tokoh Utama oleh Lara Jean Dalam Film All The Boys I've Loved Before)

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Abstract

This study investigates the use of colloquial language by the main character, Lara Jean, in the movie To All The Boys I've Loved Before. Employing a qualitative method, the analysis categorizes the character's utterances into eight types of colloquial language based on their distinct characteristics: Reduplication, Double Subject, Coinage, Compounding, Clipping, Pidgin-Induced Slang, Semantic Extension, and Contractions. A total of 79 instances of colloquial expressions were identified, showcasing the informal and dynamic nature of Lara Jean's communication style. Each type of colloquialism contributes to the construction of Lara Jean's relatable and personable character, enhancing her emotional depth and connection with the audience. For instance, the use of reduplication emphasizes emotions and ideas, while coinage and clipping reflect creativity and linguistic adaptability. This study emphasizes the role of colloquial language in shaping character identity, fostering realism, and engaging audiences. By analyzing the intricate ways in which colloquial language is woven into Lara Jean's dialogues, the research underscores its significance in the broader context of film and literary studies, particularly in illustrating informal communication's impact on storytelling. These findings contribute to understanding how language usage enhances character portrayal and narrative relatability, making this study relevant for linguistics, media, and cultural analysis.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji penggunaan bahasa kolokial oleh tokoh utama, Lara Jean, dalam film *To All The Boys I've Loved Before*. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif, analisis ini mengklasifikasikan ucapan karakter menjadi delapan jenis bahasa kolokial berdasarkan karakteristiknya: Reduplikasi, Subjek Ganda, Penciptaan Kata Baru, Komposisi, Pemotongan, Slang yang Dipengaruhi Pidgin, Ekstensi Semantik, dan Kontraksi. Sebanyak 79 contoh ekspresi kolokial diidentifikasi, yang menunjukkan gaya komunikasi Lara Jean yang informal dan dinamis. Setiap jenis kolokialisme berkontribusi pada pembentukan karakter Lara Jean yang mudah dipahami dan dapat diterima, memperkuat kedalaman emosionalnya serta keterhubungannya dengan audiens. Misalnya, penggunaan reduplikasi menekankan emosi dan ide, sedangkan penciptaan kata baru dan pemotongan mencerminkan kreativitas dan adaptabilitas linguistik. Penelitian ini menyoroti peran bahasa kolokial dalam membentuk identitas karakter, meningkatkan realisme, dan menarik minat penonton. Dengan menganalisis cara-cara kompleks di mana bahasa kolokial dijalin dalam dialog Lara Jean, penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya dalam konteks studi film dan sastra, khususnya dalam menggambarkan dampak

komunikasi informal terhadap penceritaan. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi dalam memahami bagaimana penggunaan bahasa memperkaya penggambaran karakter dan keterkaitan naratif, menjadikan penelitian ini relevan untuk analisis linguistik, media, dan budaya.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a system of symbols used for communication, allowing humans to express ideas, emotions, and thoughts (Bonvillain, 2019). It is a critical component of human interaction within cultural and social groups. While communication is universal across species, humans uniquely master cognitive language. Language evolves within social contexts, influenced by factors such as social status, ethnic background, and relationships, making it a dynamic and context-dependent phenomenon.

In linguistics, sociopragmatics studies how social contexts influence the way language is used in communication (Huang, 2015). Social elements such as culture, relationships, and hierarchy shape pragmatic choices, including tone, vocabulary, and communication strategies (Bărbuleţ, 2023). Informal or colloquial language, characterized by its casual, unstructured, and spontaneous nature, is often found in daily interactions. This type of language typically includes slang, contractions, idiomatic expressions, and regional terms, distinguishing it from formal or academic speech.

Colloquial language has an important role in creative works, particularly in movies, where it enhances the authenticity of characters and the realism of the setting. By reflecting natural speech patterns, informal language allows audiences to connect more closely with the characters and narratives. In *To All The Boys I've Loved Before*, colloquial language is prominently featured in the dialogues of the main character, Lara Jean Covey. This romantic comedy film, based on Jenny Han's novel, revolves around a shy teenager whose secret love letters to her crushes are accidentally sent, leading to life-changing events. Lara Jean's use of informal phrases, such as we're (instead of we are) and till (instead of until), highlights her relaxed and relatable communication style, contributing to her characterization.

Previous studies have examined colloquial language in various contexts. For example, Lubis and Bahri (2021) explored colloquial speech among university students, focusing on word formation processes and the influence of online platforms. Their research emphasized the prevalence of informal language in younger generations and its adaptation to modern communication trends. Hidayat and Wardana (2021) analyzed informal language in the movie script *Ada Apa Dengan Cinta 1*, identifying features such as slang, contractions, and idiomatic expressions. Their study highlighted the significance of informal language in shaping dialogues and depicting natural interactions. Additionally, Pranata and Fadilah (2021) investigated colloquial words in Facebook statuses, shedding light on the impact of social media on the evolution of everyday language.

These studies underline the importance of colloquial language in reflecting social realities and fostering relatable communication. In cinematic storytelling, informal language enhances character depth and narrative authenticity. For instance, Lara Jean's frequent use of colloquial expressions in To All The Boys I've Loved Before captures the essence of teenage life, making her character more relatable to the audience.

Building on these insights, this study aims to analyze the types of colloquial language used in the movie To All The Boys I've Loved Before. The research focuses on identifying and categorizing examples of informal language in Lara Jean's dialogues, such as contractions, slang, and idiomatic expressions. By doing so, it seeks to explore how these linguistic elements contribute to character development, audience engagement, and the portrayal of realistic communication.

This study offers a broader understanding of the sociopragmatic aspects of language in films. It provides insights into the role of colloquial language in enhancing storytelling, reflecting social contexts, and fostering connections between characters and viewers. The findings are expected to contribute to the ongoing exploration of informal language and its impact on modern communication.

2. METHODS

As Creswell (2018) elucidates, qualitative research methods form an essential data analysis component, clarifying the constraints associated with statistical data interpretation. According to Creswell, the overarching goal of qualitative methods revolves around attaining a profound comprehension of the research subject, their perspectives, motivations, and contextual occurrences. This investigative process involves constructing a comprehensive narrative through verbal descriptions, extracting detailed insights from participants, and situating the research within a natural environment.

Creswell's approach to research design, particularly his contributions to mixed methods research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), further underscores the significance of combining qualitative and quantitative methods. This holistic framework enhances the overall understanding of research phenomena, a principle that resonates with the objectives of the current study. In this research context, the adoption of qualitative descriptive research as the chosen method is justified by its capacity to provide an in-depth, detailed, and contextualized depiction of the phenomenon under scrutiny. This methodological choice aligns with Creswell's broader qualitative perspective, accentuating the importance of constructing narratives for comprehensive insights. To justify the use of qualitative methods in this study, the goal is to explore the subtleties of the colloquial language used by the lead character, Lara Jean, in "To All The Boys I've Loved Before." Movies. This method aims to provide a detailed and contextual analysis of the language, making it well-suited for examining the complexities of colloquial expressions.

The temporal application of qualitative methods is aptly chosen when the research goal involves a profound exploration and understanding of a phenomenon. In this study, the qualitative approach is deemed fitting for delving into the intricacies of colloquial language as portrayed in the movie. In terms of the involved actors, the qualitative research methods adhere to Creswell's guidance, aiming to explore and interpret the perspectives and experiences of the movie's main character, Lara Jean. The research, conducted within the natural setting of the movie, focuses on the dialogues and utterances of the main actors, emphasizing the alignment of the research approach with the natural context of the phenomenon.

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method. This approach entails a comprehensive examination of colloquial language through the meticulous analysis of utterances and dialogues of the main actors in the movie. Such a method ensures a detailed and nuanced exploration of the language used by the central character, Lara Jean, contributing to a more thorough understanding of colloquial expressions within the cinematic context.

2.1 Source of Data

Based on the previous explanation, this study collected data from the speech and dialog of Lara Jean, the lead character in the "To All the Boys I've Loved Before" movie. The primary data source is the Netflix film itself, which is examined to identify the colloquial language Lara Jean uses. Additionally, documented transcriptions serve as a secondary data source. The movie's subtitles ensure that the collected data is accurate and reliable, aligning with the descriptions noted in this research.

2.2 Data Collection

In the data collection phase, the researcher adopts a flexible and qualitative approach inspired by Malcolm Miles' theory on meticulous observation and field documentation (2014). The researcher conducts multiple viewings of the movie *To All The Boys I've Loved Before* to systematically identify and record dialogues and scenes featuring the main character, Lara Jean. The focus is on understanding her use of everyday language in various contexts within the movie. To support this process, the movie script written by Alvarez (2018), provides access to the original textual material for comprehensive analysis.

Relevant dialogues and scenes are then transcribed into written text, with careful attention given to accurately capturing Lara Jean's vernacular and linguistic nuances. During the observation and analysis, the researcher also takes comprehensive field notes to document key observations, keywords, phrases, and distinctive aspects of Lara Jean's speaking style. These notes play a vital role in organizing and processing the collected data while offering deeper insights into the use of colloquial language.

To ensure the reliability of the analysis, the researcher cross-checks the identified colloquial language against a predefined colloquial language dataset. This verification process, influenced by Miles' emphasis on detailed observation, is designed to confirm the presence of colloquial expressions and classify them into specific types. This thorough verification further strengthens the justification for focusing on particular linguistic elements. Throughout the process, the researcher is guided by Miles' assertion that careful observation and detailed documentation are essential for uncovering profound meanings within a context. By integrating this theoretical framework, the study adopts a comprehensive and systematic approach, ensuring an in-depth and nuanced exploration of colloquial language in the movie.

2.3 Data Analysis

In this study, the researcher employs content analysis to identify and analyze colloquial language in the movie *To All The Boys I've Loved Before*. Content analysis is a systematic method of examining content to identify patterns, themes, and meanings within data. As described by William (1992), it allows researchers to visualize and analyze content rigorously to uncover underlying linguistic features and contextual nuances. This structured and objective approach contributes to the reliability and validity of the findings.

The researcher begins by thoroughly familiarizing themselves with the data, reading the movie script multiple times to understand the language used by the lead character, Lara Jean. Familiarity with the data is crucial for the accurate interpretation of linguistic elements, as emphasized by William (1992), who highlights the importance of deep contextual understanding in linguistic research. Following this, the data is systematically organized by categorizing dialogues and words into specific types of colloquial language, such as reduplication, double subject, coinage, clipping, compounding, semantic extension, pidgin-induced slang, and contraction. This categorization provides a structured framework for analysis, ensuring a systematic and comprehensive examination of the linguistic elements, as outlined in William's theory.

To enhance the accuracy and completeness of the data, a rigorous validation process is undertaken. The researcher reviews the data meticulously to rectify any errors or inconsistencies, aligning with William's (1992) emphasis on the importance of meticulous validation to ensure reliable findings.

Finally, the researcher interprets the results in the context of the movie, focusing on the purpose and nuances of colloquial language in the dialogues. This analysis derives insights into daily vocabulary, grammar, speaking style, and the broader meanings conveyed through the use of colloquial language in the movie. William's theoretical framework underscores the need to move beyond surface-level observations, exploring deeper meanings and the cultural or contextual implications of linguistic choices. By systematically integrating William's theory into each step of the analysis, the study ensures an objective and robust examination of the colloquial language used in the movie, focusing on its types, functions, and relevance to the narrative and character development. Formal language and dialogues not falling within the defined colloquial language types are excluded to maintain precision and relevance in the findings.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher identified various types of colloquial language used by the lead character, Lara Jean, in the movie *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*. The findings addressed the research question: *What types of colloquial styles are used by Lara Jean, the lead character, in the "To All The Boys I've Loved Before" movie?* and aimed to determine the specific colloquial styles employed by her. The research clearly outlines its purpose and questions. In this study, certain types of colloquial language were not observed in Lara Jean's speech, specifically *semantic extension*. However, other types of colloquial language were identified, including reduplication, double subject, coinage, compounding, clipping, pidgin-induced slang, and contraction.

Table 1. Categorization and Frequency of Colloquial Language Used by Lara Jean in *To All The Boys I've Loved Before*

Type of Colloquial	Categories	Amount of Data
Reduplication	Full Reduplication	3
	Partial Reduplication	2
	Reduplication for intensity or emphasis	4
	Reduplication for Plurality	3
	Reduplication for Iterative or Repetitive action	2
Double Subject	-	1
Coinage	Invention	2
	Blending	5
	Acronym and Initialism	2
	Backformation	2
	Eponyms	-
Compounding	-	17
Clipping	-	13
Semantic Extension	-	-
Pidding-induce Slang	-	5

Contraction	-	18
Total		79

According to the table, 79 instances of colloquial language were identified in the movie, and categorized into specific groups. The data is systematically explained to avoid redundancy, providing a clear and structured overview of the findings.

3.1 Reduplication

Lara Jean frequently employs reduplication in her dialogues, a feature of colloquial language where sounds or syllables are repeated for emphasis or to convey specific meanings. For instance, in the dialogue *"Wait. How do we do this?"* and *"How do we have a contract for a real relationship?"*, Lara Jean repeats the phrase *"How do,"* employing partial reduplication to emphasize her uncertainty and questioning. This linguistic device adds expressiveness and dynamism to her speech, aligning with the informal and relaxed nature of colloquial language.

Radford (2018) describes colloquial language as relaxed and irregular in its usage, with features like reduplication enhancing its dynamic and expressive qualities. Reduplication involves the repetition of words, sounds, or syllables, providing nuanced emphasis or variation in meaning, often mirroring the conversational tone and informality seen in daily interactions.

Table 2. Frequency of Reduplication in Colloquial Language Used by Lara Jean

Reduplication	**Words or Phrases**	**Frequency**
Full reduplication	kiss! Kiss! Kiss!	1
	Bye Bye	1
	It's real! It's really real	1
Partial reduplication	easier and easier	1
	How do	2
Reduplication for intensity or emphasis	re-read	1
	Oh my good, oh my good, oh my good	1
	Think, think, think,	1
	We can't talk about this, we can't talk about this.	1
Reduplication for plurality	each	2
	moments	2
	letters	6
Reduplication for iterative or repetitive action	How do	2
	What do	1
Total		**23**

The 23 instances of reduplication identified in Lara Jean's dialogues highlight her expressive and informal communication style, which aligns with the relaxed nature of colloquial language. Full reduplication, such as *"kiss! Kiss! Kiss!"*, is used to amplify emotions or draw attention, reflecting excitement or insistence. Partial reduplication, as in *"easier and easier,"* indicates a progressive or iterative emphasis, suggesting gradual improvement or repetition. Reduplication for intensity or emphasis is evident in phrases like *"Oh my good, oh my good, oh my good,"* which conveys heightened emotions such as surprise or disbelief. Additionally, reduplication for plurality, seen in words like *"letters"*, clarifies and reinforces the plural nature of the term. Finally, reduplication for iterative or repetitive action, such as *"How do"* or *"What do"*, portrays Lara Jean's reflective and curious nature as she navigates her thoughts and questions. These varied uses of reduplication not only enrich her dialogues but also make them more engaging, expressive, and relatable, showcasing the dynamic nature of colloquial expression in her speech.

3.2 Double Subject

In the movie *"To All The Boys I've Loved Before,"* directed by Susan Johnson and adapted from Jenny Han's novel, Lara Jean, the lead character, employs various colloquial expressions, including the use of

double subjects. One example is found in the dialogue, *"Before you dated Margot and we couldn't be who we were when she was who she was."* In this sentence, the subjects *"you"* and *"we"* coexist within the same context, emphasizing the emotional dynamics of the characters and their intertwined relationships.

The use of double subjects serves to heighten the emotional depth of the dialogue, illustrating Lara Jean's internal conflict and her perspective on Margot's influence. This structure is characteristic of colloquial language, which thrives in informal settings where the natural flow of conversation often deviates from strict grammatical conventions.

Pullum and Huddleston (2005) define the double subject as a syntactic feature where two or more subjects are present in a sentence, often serving to highlight specific aspects of the subjects or their relationships. In this context, the repetition and overlap of subjects such as *"you"* and *"we"* not only enhance the conversational tone but also reflect the complexity of the characters' interactions.

Lara Jean's use of double subjects demonstrates how colloquial language can effectively convey nuanced emotions and relational dynamics. This structure, while informal, enriches her speech by making it more expressive and relatable, aligning with the movie's focus on personal relationships and everyday communication.

3.3 Coinage

The findings reveal Lara Jean's use of coinage as a significant aspect of her language expression, showcasing her creativity and alignment with the informal tone of colloquial language. Coinage involves the creation of new words or phrases, as noted by Crystal (1999), often through processes such as invention, blending, acronyms, initialisms, and backformation. For instance, in the dialogue *"Well, yeah. That's what I needed to say, and I said it, so I guess I should go now,"* Lara Jean uses the blended phrase *"I guess"* to convey uncertainty, which reflects the inventive nature of colloquial speech.

Table 3. The result coinage of the type colloquial language

Coinage	Words or Phrases	Frequency
Invention	etsy	1
	e-bay	1
Blending	ski-trip	1
	crop top	1
	cardigan	1
	jet-lag	1
	skype	1
Acronyms and Initialisms	triple A	1
	BFF	1
Backformation	phone	1
	lunch	1
Total		**12**

The table above categorizes the types of coinage used by Lara Jean and highlights their frequency. The invention, as seen in words like *"etsy"* and *"e-bay,"* reflects the incorporation of modern digital terminology into her speech. Blending, a dominant type, appears in terms such as *"ski trip," "crop top,"* and *"jet lag,"* where existing words are combined to create new meanings, often aligning with casual, everyday contexts. Acronyms and initialisms, such as *"BFF"* (Best Friends Forever) and *"triple A"* (American Automobile Association), demonstrate linguistic economy and cultural influence in informal speech. Finally, backformation, evident in simplified terms like *"phone"* (from *"telephone"*) and *"lunch"* (from *"luncheon"*), showcases the tendency to shorten and streamline language for ease of use.

These 12 instances of coinage enrich Lara Jean's dialogues, reflecting the fluidity and inventiveness of colloquial language. Coinage allows for linguistic adaptation, enabling her to express herself dynamically and engagingly, while also illustrating real-world patterns of language evolution in informal settings.

3.4 Compounding

Lara Jean's dialogues in the movie showcase various instances of compounding, a process where two or more words are combined to form a new term with a unified meaning. For example, in the dialogue *"and recycled our friendship as soon as,"* the word *"friendship"* exemplifies compounding, as it is derived from the combination of *"friend"* and *"ship,"* which together signify a relationship between friends. Yule (2017) explains that compounding involves merging individual terms to create a new word that often reflects a blend of their original meanings.

Table 4. Compounding Found in Lara Jean's Colloquial Language

Words or Phrases of Compounding	Frequency
break-up	1
recycle	2
friendship	1
bathroom	1
homework	2
boyfriend	3
cupcake	3
cafeteria	1
bleachers	2
Total	**17**

Table 4 illustrates that *"boyfriend"* and *"cupcake"* were among the most frequently used compound words in Lara Jean's dialogues, reflecting common themes of relationships and daily life. Words like *"break-up"* and *"recycle"* highlight the emotional and contextual nuances of her conversations. Compounding serves as an essential linguistic device in her speech, enriching her colloquial expressions with terms that are relatable and contextually appropriate.

3.5 Clipping

Clipping is another prevalent feature of Lara Jean's speech, characterized by shortening longer words into abbreviated forms. For instance, in the dialogue *"We won't see you til Christmas!"* the word *"til"* is a clipped version of *"until."* This process involves removing syllables to create a more concise and informal term, often used in casual communication. Clipping allows for brevity and efficiency while maintaining the intended meaning.

Table 5. Clipping Found in Lara Jean's Colloquial Language

Words or Phrases of Clipping	Frequency
dad	3
til	2
pubs	1
where r u?	1
bike	1
phone	2
cuz	3
dunno	3
bae	1
gonna	10
sups	1
yeah	17
gotta	1
Total	**46**

Table 5 indicates that *"yeah"* is the most frequently used clipped word, appearing 17 times, showcasing its utility in affirmations and casual responses. Other clipped forms like *"gonna"* (from *"going to"*) and *"cuz"* (from *"because"*) reflect the relaxed and conversational tone of Lara Jean's speech. These clipped terms contribute to the overall informality and relatability of her dialogues, enhancing the dynamic nature of her colloquial language.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1 Conclusion

In essence, Lara Jean's colloquial language in "To All The Boys I've Loved Before" encompasses reduplication, double subject, compounding, coinage, clipping, pidgin-induced slang, and contraction. These linguistic elements add depth to her character, portraying a genuine and relatable communication style. Lara Jean's use of partial reduplication emphasizes uncertainty, the double subject may not be extensively discussed by experts, Coinage showcases the creation of currency or words, compounding serves as a powerful mechanism for growth, clipping can be a dynamic and natural linguistic phenomenon that simplifies communication by creating shorter, pidgin-induced slangs add informality, and contraction

contributes to spontaneity. Understanding these colloquialism styles enhances our appreciation of the movie's authenticity and cultural resonance.

Moving forward, delving deeper into the cultural implications of colloquial language in movies exploring variations across diverse linguistic communities, and examining the impact of colloquialism on character development could provide valuable insights for future research. Such endeavors would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of colloquial language in cinematic contexts and its significance in storytelling.

4.2 Suggestion

In completing this research, the researcher offers several suggestions for future research endeavors in this field. Delving deeper into the nuances of colloquial language in audiovisual works could provide valuable insights into its role in character development and storytelling. Future studies could investigate how different characters within the same narrative employ distinct colloquial styles and explore the cultural or contextual factors influencing these linguistic choices. Such research would enrich the understanding of everyday language in movies. Additionally, comparative studies across various genres or cultural contexts could uncover broader patterns in the use of colloquial language, highlighting its dynamic nature in storytelling. Exploring the impact of colloquial styles on audience engagement and reception could also open avenues for interdisciplinary research at the intersection of linguistics and media studies.

The movie *To All The Boys I've Loved Before*, an original Netflix production released in 2018, provides a rich subject for future research. Researchers could continue to use this movie as a case study, applying other linguistic theories to analyze its dialogues and narrative. For instance, future studies could explore linguistic aspects such as sarcasm, politeness, impoliteness, deixis, and others to further enrich the body of research on this movie. By incorporating diverse linguistic frameworks, future research can uncover additional layers of meaning and expand the understanding of the linguistic intricacies within the film.

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