CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses background of the study, statement of the problems, purposes of the study, scope and limitation, significance of the study, and definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a means of communication. According to Goldstein (2008:357), language as a system of communication using sound or symbols that enables us to express our feelings, thoughts, ideas, and experiences. Moreover, Tagliamonte (2006:7) stated, language is used to give information from one person to others. Thus, language has a social function as a tool to make a connection between human beings through spoken, written, and gesture. By language, people can convey message to another by expressing their feelings, thoughts, ideas, and experiences.

Sociolinguistics is one of the subjects studied by students majoring language study in higher education program in Indonesia. It is not like the studies of language interior such as, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, but it is more an exploration of language uses and users. According to Trudgill in Tagliamonte (2006:3), sociolinguistic is the relationship between language and society. Besides, Sociolinguistic is the study of language that has relation with society (Jendra, 2010:9). Society impinges or influences on language because of two factors; social and situational factors. Social factors which can influence language are high social class, ethnic group, age and gender. Situational factors which influence language
depend on the speaker who using it, where and why it is being used. Because of those two factors, it can cause language varieties.

Language varieties are different dialects of the same language (Steward Jr. et al 2001:302). People use their different dialects to converse with others within same situation even in the same context. It can make every speaker in different areas or communities have a language variety. Language varieties include slang, jargon, argot, cant, and colloquial. In this study, the writer intended to discuss one of those language varieties that are slang.

According to Robert in Fromkin (2003:473), slang is one of those things that everybody can recognize and nobody can define. Generally, most people use slang on some circumstances, but it is difficult to describe the word. Moreover, slang may be defined as recombining old words into new meaning, it introduces many new words into the language, such as spaced out, right on, hang-up, and rip-off have all gained a degree of acceptance. It also introduces entirely new words, such as barf, flub, and pooped (Fromkin, 2003:473). Therefore, its meaning cannot be found in a formal dictionary.

The creator of slang is encouraged to create new terms which are creative, innovative, productive, even shocking, and amusing. For example, teenagers use their creativity to create slang terms from the existing words. In this case, teenagers still use the original words, but acquire a new meaning which is different from its original meaning.

Slang is used in the informal situation because it consists of nonstandard words, phrase and expressions. When talking about slang, people usually indicate
words, not grammar or pronunciation. This is more or less the correct view. Still, talking about “slang language”, which is not accurate because every language contains vocabulary and grammar. English is a language, but slang is not.

Slang is not only found in a conversation, but it is also in written material which contains quite a lot of it, such as novels and short stories. Mostly, the author uses slangs to picture the story that he or she wants to create.

To discuss the phenomena, the writer takes some previous study related to this topic. First is Wulandari (2005) who conducted her research related to the slang on the title “Study on Slang Words Used in the Last Picture Novel”. She found out two types of slang words used in “Last Picture Show.” Those kinds of slang were common slang and in-group slang which were used to describe the character and the situation of teenagers in the story.

Second, the result of research conducted by Widyarani (2007) who investigated slang found in “Just Like Lizzie” short story by Jasmine Jones, it was found that there were 54 slang words in “Just Like Lizzie” short-story. Most of it was used by teenagers in informal situation. Since slang is creative, there were some slang words found in this story was formed in three ways; the invention of new expression, the changing of old expression into new uses, and the shortened forms from the old expression.

Based on the explanation, the researcher would like to investigate the slangs found in “All American Girl 01” novel by Meg Cabot. Meg Cabot is an American author of romantic and paranormal fiction for teens and adults. She has written and published over fifty books. All American Girl is one of her famous novels which
reached number one in the New York Times best-seller list for children's books in 2002. The writer chooses this novel as the object of this study because it contains slangs which are aimed at describing the story of American teenagers’ life. More specifically, she needs to analyze what are slangs and their meanings which are found in the novel.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the background, the researcher has two problems. They are formulated as follows:

1. What are the slangs found in “All American Girl 01” novel by Meg Cabot?
2. What are the semantics meanings of the slangs found in “All American Girl 01” novel by Meg Cabot?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The problems in this study become the basic foundation to determine the purposes of the study which are stated as follows:

1. To find the slangs found in “All American Girl 01” novel by Meg Cabot.
2. To know the semantics meanings of the slangs found in “All American Girl 01” novel by Meg Cabot.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to enrich the study of sociolinguistics, especially slang. Besides, it is expected to give contribution for both sociolinguistics lecturers and English Department students. For English lectures, the result of this study is expected to give information and reference about slang and its meaning. While for students, it is hoped that this research can give knowledge and help them in learning slang and its
meaning. Also, it can be used as one of references for the next researchers who are interested in the study of slang in different setting.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study focuses on slangs and the limitation of this study is slangs in “All American Girl 01” novel by Meg Cabot.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To clarify the terms used in this study for the readers, the writer gives some definitions of key terms. They are investigated in this study are as follows:

1. Analysis is a description about element that has purpose to comprehend the relation between one element and others in supporting the meaning of literary work (Sudjiman in Priniawati, 2005)

2. Slang is the introduction of many new words into the language by recombining old words into new meaning (Fromkin, 2003:473)

3. Novel is a book-length story in prose, whose author tries to create the sense that, while we read, we experience actual life (Kennedy in Lestari, 2005)


5. All American Girl 01 is the title of Meg Cabot’s novel that is analyzed in this study.

6. Semantic meaning is the study of linguistic meaning of morpheme, words, phrases, and sentences (Fromkin, 2010: 180)