

## Conference Paper

# Diglossic Situation in Rainbow Rowell's Novel *Eleanor & Park*

M. Amrin Siregar

Faculty of Literataure, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara (UISU), Medan, Indonesia

**ORCID:**

M. Amrin Siregar: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8518-8089>

**Abstract**

This study concerned the diglossic situation in Rainbow Rowell's *Eleanor & Park*, written in 2016. It aimed to describe the use of two different varieties of English in the novel, that is, **H** (high) variety and **L** (low) variety of the language. These varieties were found in terms of function, prestige, lexicon (vocabulary) and grammar used by some of the characters in the novel when speaking to each other. The results showed that, in terms of function, the recitation or reading of a poem by one of the characters was conducted in **H** (high) variety. The **H** (high) variety used was more prestigious. In terms of grammar, the **H** (high) variety was also used by a teacher when appreciating his female student who had just recited or read the poem. Some of the words or lexicons used by some of the other characters of the novel were in the form of **L** (low) varieties. The analysis was conducted through the qualitative research methods proposed by Creswell (2009: 4) who explained that this type of research method is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.

**Keywords:** diglossic situation, high variety, low variety

Corresponding Author:

M. Amrin Siregar

[amrinsiregaruisu@gmail.com](mailto:amrinsiregaruisu@gmail.com)

Published: 11 March 2021

Publishing services provided by  
Knowledge E

© M. Amrin Siregar. This article is distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License](#), which permits unrestricted use and redistribution provided that the original author and source are credited.

Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the AICLL Conference Committee.

## 1. Introduction

All social creatures must speak to each other in their daily life. Each of them must belong to a certain speech community in order to be able to do that. Their activities to speak can be at homes, at work places, at schools or universities, in markets, in ritual places, in a bus/ bus stations, in a plane/ airports, on the seashores, and so on. At the time they are speaking to each other, they normally use the language they know in their community. Say, for example, they use Indonesian language to speak and to understand each other because they belong to Indonesian speech community. They speak, of course, depending on a situation and a place where and when they are at that moment. It can be in a formal or informal places or situation. It cannot be denied that they will use **H** (High) variety or a formal form of Indonesian language when, for example,

 OPEN ACCESS

they are speaking to their teachers or lecturers at schools or universities, when they are speaking to each other in a formal meeting, and when they are delivering a speech in a seminar, etc. However, when each of them is at home, they will use **L** (Low) variety or an informal form of Indonesian language when they are speaking to their parents, brothers and sisters. Every educated person usually knows when and where they will use the **H** variety and **L** variety of their own language.

## 2. Literature Review

Diglossia constitutes a linguistic phenomenon found in many multilingual speech communities. It describes a particular type of sociolinguistic situation in which there is a clear differentiation in function between the languages or language varieties used in a bilingual/ multilingual community. This term may be said to refer to a situation in which two different or distinct varieties of a language are spoken within the same speech community. It can also be described as the coexistence of language codes that are either two varieties of one language or two distinct languages.

A diglossic situation exists in a society when it has two distinct codes which show clear functional separation; that is, one is employed in one set of circumstances and the other one in an entirely different set (Wardhaugh, 1986: 87).

This term was first introduced into English from French by an American linguist, Charles Albert Ferguson, in his article entitled "Diglossia" in the journal "Word" in 1959, to refer to "one particular kind of standardization where two varieties of a language exist side by side throughout the community, with each having a definite role to play". Since the publication of the article, it has attracted wide attention of linguists. He is credited to be the first linguist using the term "diglossia" and later it becomes famous. According to him, the two varieties of a language, that is, high variety (**H**-variety) and low variety (**L**-variety), have to be two divergent forms of the same language which are above the level of a standard-with-dialects distinction, but which stay below the level of two separate (related or unrelated) languages. Characteristically, the H-variety is never used for everyday conversation and in this respect a diglossic situation differs from a standard-with-dialects situation in which the standard may also be used for everyday conversation.

The original description of the term "diglossia", according to Ferguson (1959: 336), is "a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the

vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.”

The definition of “diglossia” given by Ferguson is quite specific on several points. For example, he requires that the High and Low varieties should belong to the same language, e.g. Standard (or Classical) and Colloquial Arabic. In an Arabic-speaking diglossic community, for example, the language used at home is a local version of Arabic (there may be very great differences between one “dialect” of Arabic and another, to the point of mutual incomprehensibility), with little variation between the most educated and the least educated speaker. However, if someone needs to give lecture at a university or a sermon in a mosque, he is expected to use Standard Arabic, a variety different at all levels from the local vernacular, and felt to be so different from the vernacular that it is taught in school in the way that foreign languages are taught in English speaking societies. Likewise, when children learn to read and write, it is standard language, and not to the local vernacular, which they are taught.

The most obvious difference between diglossic and normal English speaking societies is that no one in the former has advantage of learning the High variety (as used on formal occasions and in education) as his first language, since every one speaks the Low variety at home. Consequently, the way to acquire a High variety in such a society is not by being born into the right kind of family, but by going to school. Of course, there are still differences between families in their ability to effort education; therefore, diglossia does not guarantee linguistic equality between poor and rich, but the differences emerge only in formal situations requiring the High variety, rather than as soon as a speaker opens his mouth.

Varshney (1998: 291) explains that the use of two widely divergent forms of the same language by all members of the community under different conditions is called diglossia. He adds that in such a situation, a ‘high’ or a ‘classical’ literary language is used for formal occasions and in written texts, and a ‘low’ or vernacular form is used in colloquial conversation. Thus, within the same speech community, one form is used for specialized activities—official work, religion, education, law, press, radio, television, literature, etc. The other form is used for non-specialized daily activities. Perhaps the most familiar example is the standard language and regional dialect as used, say, in Italian or Persian, where many speakers speak their local dialect at home or among family or friends of the same dialect area but use the standard language in communicating with speakers of other dialects or on public occasions. A similar situation exists in the Arabic world, where

classical Arabic is used for specialized purposes by speakers of all dialects of Arabic. An example from India would be ‘high’ and ‘low’ Tamil. These forms vary considerable at all levels of language—sounds, words, grammar and meaning. Holmes (2001: 27) added that in the narrow and original sense of the term, diglossia has three crucial features, that is, (1) two distinct varieties of the same language are used in the community, with one regarded as a high (or **H**) variety and the other a low (or **L**) variety (2) each variety is used for quite distinct functions; **H** and **L** complement each other, and (3) no one uses the **H** variety in everyday conversation.

Another linguist, Fishman (1967), however, presents a modification of Ferguson’s (1959) original concept and rather strict definition of diglossia. He proposes an expansion of Ferguson’s definition of diglossia in two aspects. These two aspects that are described by him explain that (1) a diglossic speech community is not characterized by the use of two language varieties only. There may be more than two language varieties used within a diglossic community, and (2) according to him, diglossia refers to all kinds of language varieties which show functional distribution in a speech community. Then, diglossia, as a consequence, describes a number of sociolinguistic situations, from stylistic differences within one language or the use of separate dialects (Ferguson’s ‘standard-with-dialects’ distinction) to the use of (related or unrelated) separate languages.

Diglossia has characteristic features, and the characteristic features of diglossia has already been explained by Ferguson through the nine topics which are important to know, that is, function, prestige, literary heritage, acquisition, standardization, stability, grammar, lexicon, and phonology. Each of the topics which constitute the characteristic features of diglossia that really need to be known can be explained below.

## 2.1. Function

One of the most important features of diglossia is the specialization of function for **H** (high) variety and **L** (low) variety. In a certain situation, it is only **H** (high) variety which is appropriate while in another situation it is only **L** (low) variety which is regarded appropriate. **H** (high) variety and **L** (low) variety are used for different purposes, and native speakers of a speech community would find it odd or strange (even ridiculous or deserving to be laughed at and outrageous or very shocking and unacceptable) if there is anyone who used **H** (high) variety in an **L** (low) variety domain, or **L** (low) variety in an **H** (high) variety domain.

Examples:

- a. Sermon in mosque or church (**H**)

- b. Speech in parliament, political speech (**H**)
- c. Newspaper editorials (**H**)
- d. Radio “soap opera“(L)
- e. Conversation with colleagues, friends and family members (**L**)
- f. Poetry (**H**)
- g. Conversation or instruction to workmen, waiters, servant clerks (**L**)
- h. University lecture (**H**)
- i. News broadcast (**H**)
- j. Personal letters (**L**)
- k. Business letter (**H**)

## 2.2. Prestige

The **H** (high) variety is the prestigious variety; the **L** (low) variety lacks prestige. In a diglossic society, the speakers regard the **H** (high) variety as more prestigious or superior to the **L** (low) variety. The **L** (low) variety is regarded inferior; moreover, there are a number of people who refuse its existence. In other words, one does not use an **H** (high) variety in circumstances calling for an **L** (low) variety, e.g., for addressing a servant; nor does one usually use an **H** (high) variety when an **L** (low) variety is called for, e.g., for writing a ‘serious’ work of literature (Wardhaugh, 1986: 88).

In Indonesian speaking society, the variety which is standard (standard Indonesian language) is regarded more prestigious than the variety which is not standard.

## 2.3. Literary Heritage

It is only the **H** (high) variety which must be used in any literary works. Wardhaugh (1986: 89) adds that the natural superiority of the H variety is undoubtedly reinforced by the fact that a considerable body of literature will be found to exist in that variety and almost none in other.

## 2.4. Acquisition

The **L** (low) variety is the variety which is learned first, whereas the **H** (high) variety is chiefly obtained or accomplished by the means of formal education. It is added that

the **L** (low) variety is obtained from daily conversation with all of family members, close friends, etc.

Ferguson (1959) describes that adults usually use the **L** (low) variety in speaking to children and children use the **L** (low) variety in speaking to one another. Consequently, the **L** (low) variety is learned by children in what may be regarded as the “normal” way of learning one’s mother tongue. The **H** (high) variety is taught whereas the **L** variety is learned.

## 2.5. Standardization

The **H** (high) variety is regarded as a prestigious one. Therefore, it is quite possible to standardize this variety through formal codification.

Dictionaries, grammars, treatises on pronunciation, etc. are written in the **H** (high) variety. There are established norms for grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary which allow variation only within certain limits. On the contrary, descriptive and normative studies of the **L** (low) variety are either non-existent or relatively recent and slight in quantity. Studies concerning this variety, if any, are usually carried out first of chiefly by scholars from other speech communities and are written in other languages.

As the chosen and standardized variety, the **H** (high) variety will certainly be a more respected one.

## 2.6. Stability

It is not right to suppose that diglossia is highly unstable. Diglossia typically persists at least several centuries, and evidence in some cases seems to show that it can last well over a thousand years. The communicative tensions arising in the diglossia situation may be resolved by the used of relatively un-codified, unstable, intermediate forms of the language and repeated borrowing of the vocabulary items from the **H** (high) variety to the **L** (low) variety.

## 2.7. Grammar

According to Ferguson, the **H** (high) variety and the **L** (low) variety constitute forms of the same language; however, there are differences in grammar. In other words, the **H** (high) variety has grammatical categories which are not present in the **L** (low) variety and has an inflectional system of nouns and verbs which is much reduced or totally

absent in **L** (low) variety. For example, Classical Arabic has three cases in the nouns, marked by endings; colloquial dialects have none. Standard German has four cases in the nouns and two non-periphrastic indicative tenses in the verbs; Swiss German has three cases in the nouns and only one simple indicative tense.

It is not likely to cause disagreement (**H** (high) variety is certainly safe) to say in diglossia there are always extensive differences between the grammatical structures of the **H** (high) variety and the **L** (low) variety.

## 2.8. Lexicon

Generally speaking, the bulk of the vocabulary of **H** (high) variety and **L** (low) variety is shared, of course with variations in form and with differences of use the meaning. It is hardly surprising, however, that **H** (high) variety should include in its total lexicon technical terms and learned expressions which have no regular **L** (low) variety equivalents since the subject involved are rarely if ever discussed in pure **L** (low) variety. Also, it is not surprising that the **L** (low) varieties should include in their total lexicons popular expressions and the names of very homely objects or objects of very localized distribution which have no regular **H** (high) variety. However, a striking feature of diglossia is the existence of many paired items, one **H** (high) variety one **L** (low) variety, referring to fairly common concepts frequently used in both **H** (high) variety and **L** (low) variety, where the range of meaning of the two items is roughly the same, and the use of one or the other immediately stamps the utterance or written sequence as **H** (high) variety or **L** (low) variety.

## 2.9. Phonology

It may seem difficult to offer any generalization on the relationship between the phonology of **H** (high) variety and **L** (low) variety in diglossia in view of the diversity of the data. **H** (high) variety and **L** (low) variety phonologies may be quite close, as in Greek; moderately different, as in Arabic or Haitian Creole; or strikingly divergent, as in Swiss German. Closer examination, however, shows to statements to be justified (Perhaps these will turn out to be unnecessary when the preceding features are stated so precisely that the statements about phonology can be deduced directly from them);

a. The sound systems of **H** (high) variety and **L** (low) variety constitute a single phonological structure of which the **L** (low) variety phonology is the basic system and the divergent features of **H** (high) variety phonology are either a subsystem or a parasystem.

Given the mixed forms mentioned above and the corresponding difficulty of identifying a given word in a given utterance as being definitely **H** (high) variety or definitely **L** (low) variety, it seems necessary to assume that the speaker has a single inventory of distinctive oppositions for the whole **H** (high) variety - **L** (low) variety complex and that there is extensive interference in both directions in terms of the distribution of phonemes in specific lexical items.

b. If “pure” **H** (high) variety items have phonemes not found in “pure” **L** (low) variety items, **L** (low) variety phonemes frequently substitute for these in oral of **H** (high) variety and regularly replace them in *tatsamas*. For example, French has a high front rounded vowel phoneme /ü/; “pure” Haitian Creole has no such phoneme. Educated speakers of Creole use this vowel in *tatsamas* such as Luk (/lük/ for the Gospel of St. Luke), while they, like uneducated speakers, may sometimes use /i/ for it when speaking French. On the other hand, /i/ is the regular vowel in such *tatsamas* in Creole as linet ‘glasses’.

In cases where **H** (high) variety represents in large part an earlier stage of **L** (low) variety, it is possible that a three-way correspondence will appear. For example, Syriac and Egyptian Arabic frequently use /s/ for / ø / in oral use of Classical Arabic, and have /s/ in *tatsamas*, but have /t/ in words regularly descended from earlier Arabic not borrowed from the Classical.

### 3. Research Method

It cannot be denied that there must be a method used in a research. In this research, a qualitative one is used. It is the research which involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g. text) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. In other words, the qualitative research is framed in terms of using words. The method which is used in this research is a qualitative research method that is proposed by Creswell (2009: 4). According to him, this type of research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data.



## 4. Discussion and Result

There are only four topics of diglossia which will be analyzed here. They are function, prestige, grammar and lexicon. Though there are many things concerning each of them that are found in the novel, the writer only discusses some of them which are regarded important to be discussed here.

### 4.1. Function and Prestige

It is found that one of the main characters of the novel, Eleanor, is asked by her teacher, Mr. Stessman, to recite or read a poem. Then, she tries her best to read or recite the poem. In other words, she does not refuse what her teacher has just asked her to do. The title of the poem she reads or recites is "I had been hungry all the years." The reading of the poem can be described through the quotations below.

My noon had come, to dine, I, trembling, drew the table near, and touched  
the curious wine. I was this on tables I had seen, when turning, hungry, lone,  
I looked in windows, for the wealth, I could not hope to own.

(Rowell, 2013: 15)

It can be seen that in the above poem Eleanor has used **H** (high) variety of English. It means that it can be seen that in reciting or reading a poem, it is only an **H** (high) variety of a language that must be functioned or used. Mr. Stessman even appreciates her after she reads the poem in such a beautiful way by stating that her poem is something wonderful. Because it is recited or written in an **H** (high) variety of English, it can, of course, be regarded as a prestigious one in a literary work.

### 4.2. Grammar

The grammatical structures or **H** (high) varieties of English sentences are used by some characters of the novel. The sentences which are used grammatically by them can be found at the moment Mr. Stessman asks his student, Eleanor, to read a poem. After Eleanor reads the poem, he appreciates her. The use of the grammatical sentences mentioned by him can be described through the quotation below.

Mr. Stessman didn't stop her, so she read the whole poem in cool, defiant voice. The same voice she'd used on Tina. "That was wonderful," Mr. Stessman said when she was done. He was beaming. "Just wonderful. I hope you'll

stay with us, Eleanor, at least until we do *Medea*. That's a voice that arrives on a chariot drawn by dragons."

(Rowell, 2013: 15)

The sentences mentioned by Mr. Stessman in the above quotation, that is, (1) "That's was wonderful." and (2) "Just wonderful. I hope you'll stay with us, Eleanor, at least until we do *Medea*. That's a voice that arrives on a chariot drawn by dragons." are standard forms of English sentences. The sentence in (1) is the standard form of a simple sentence in positive statement and in simple past tense. In (2), there are standard complex sentences containing a noun clause *you'll stay with us, Eleanor*, whose function is as the object of the transitive verb *hope*, an adverb clause of time *until we do Medea*, and two adjective clauses *that arrives on a chariot* and *(which is) drawn by dragons*.

The situation in the above conversation is formal because it happens in a classroom. As a teacher, Mr. Stessman asks his female student, Eleanor, to read a poem. In this situation, it is, of course, suitable for him to use the **H** (high) variety of English or the standard forms of the above English sentences.

In the conversation between Mr. Stessman and his students, he asks them all for memorizing a poem they like. They seem to respect what he tells them. He asks them using some grammatical complex sentences. The conversation in which he uses the grammatical sentences can be described through the quotation below.

Mr. Stessman was making them all memorize a poem, whatever they wanted. Well, whatever poem they picked. "You're going to forget everything else I teach you," Mr Stessman said, petting his mustache. ".... Maybe you'll remember that fought a monster. Maybe you'll remember that 'To be or Not to be' is Hamlet, .... "

(Rowell, 2013: 21)

In the above quotation, it can be seen that the sentences used by Mr. Stessman when speaking to his students in the classroom are grammatical complex sentences. The first grammatical complex sentence used is "You're going to forget everything else I teach you." This complex sentence contains the main clause *You're going to forget everything else* and the subordinate clause *I teach you*. The subordinate clause used is in the form of adjective clause modifying the words *everything else*. The second and the third grammatical complex sentence used are ".... Maybe you'll remember that Beowulf fought a monster. Maybe you'll remember that 'To be or Not to be' is Hamlet, .... "In these two complex sentences, the main clauses are the same, that is, *Maybe*

*you'll remember*, whereas each of the subordinate clauses is *that Bewoulf fought a monster* and *that 'To be or Not to be' is Hamlet*. The subordinate clauses used here are both in the forms of noun clauses as the objects of the transitive verb *remember*.

The grammatical sentences can also be seen in the novel at the moment there is a conversation in the classroom between Mr. Stessman and one of his female students. They are discussing about a play named *Romeo and Juliet* written by William Shakespeare. The discussion can be seen through the quotation below.

She rolled her eyes again. She knew Mr, Stessman's game by now. "Romeo and Juliet are just two rich kids who've always gotten every little thing they want. And now, they think they want each other." "They're in love .... "Mr. Stessman said, clutching his heart. "They don't even know each other," she said. "It was love at first sight."

(Rowell, 2013: 44)

The quotation written above contains sentences which are in the grammatical forms. Mr. Stessman and his female student use the **H** (high) varieties of English in their discussion. The sentences are "Romeo and Juliet are just two rich kids who've always gotten every little thing they want. And now, they want each other.", "They are in love.", "They don't even know each other.", and "It was love at first sight." It is reasonable for them to use the grammatical simple and complex sentences because the place where they are discussing the play is the classroom where Park and Eleanor study together.

### 4.3. Lexicon

It can clearly be seen that some characters of the novel use the **L** (low) variety of lexicons or vocabularies which constitute very informal words and expressions. They use them in the spoken form of the language which are not thought suitable for a formal situation and place. The uses of these **L** (low) varieties of the lexicons or vocabularies can be described through the quotations below.

Park managed another smile and slunk back into his seat, putting his headphones back on and cranking up the volume. He could still hear Steve and Mikey, four seats behind him. "But what the *fucking* point?" Mikey asked. "*Dude*, would you want to fight a drunken monkey? They are *fucking* huge. Like *Every Which Way But Loose*, man. Imagine that *bastard* losing his shit on you." (Rowell, 2013: 7)

It is found in the above quotation that there are the uses of the words *fucking*, *dude* and *bastard*. The previous word, *fucking*, in the words *fucking point* and *fucking huge*, is used by Mikey to express his anger and annoyance to one of his friends who is not intimate to him. The next word, that is, *dude*, is a slang which can be meant *man*. In other words, the word *dude* is the low variety of the word *man*. It is mentioned by Steve instead of *Mikey* because the situation of their conversation is very informal. The other word, that is, *bastard* is also a slang which shows a derogatory expression. This word can be meant as an unpleasant or despicable person. This low variety is used by Steve, one of the characters of the novel, to show his critical attitude to one of the other characters' reputation and his insult to him.

The other word or lexicon that is in the form of **L** (low) variety can be seen in the novel at the time Park is angry with her sister, Tina. The girl has just told their mom that Park already has a girl friend whose name is Eleanor. Park, however, does not like his sister to tell her mother about his girl-friend, Eleanor. He says to his mother that she is not his girl fiend, and then his mother asks Tina to the kitchen in order that she will not tell about Eleanor anymore. Nevertheless, Park is still angry with Tina. He still forces himself to argue with his sister. Then he slams the door of the garage and goes into the kitchen. There, he slams the oven, the cabinet, the trash, and some other things. Hearing this, his father gets angry with him and comes into the kitchen to stops Park to do it. This incident can be seen through a conversation in the quotation below.

“What *the hell* is wrong with you?” his dad said, walking into the kitchen. Park froze. He could not get into trouble tonight. “Nothing,” he said. “Sorry. I’m sorry.” “Jesus, Park, take it out on the bag ..... “There was an old-school punching bag in the garage, hanging way out of Park’s reach.

(Rowell, 2013: 100)

In the above quotation, it can be seen that Park’s father is angry with him. His father is angry with him after knowing that he argues with Tina. Besides, his father hears that he has just slammed the door of the garage and other things. The combination of the words *the hell* in *What the hell is wrong with you?* constitutes an **L** (low) variety of English. When the combination of the words *the hell* are used in the Emphatic Colloquial Interrogative, it means that somebody who mentions such a sentence is showing his or her anger or annoyance with somebody else.

In the other moment, it can be seen that Richie, Eleanor’s father, is angry with her. This happens at the time he hears Eleanor is typing song lyrics upstairs of her house.

Richie who wants quietness feels that the typing sounds made by Eleanor really disturb his ears. The anger of Richie can be described below.

So Eleanor was upstairs, typing song lyrics. "Scarborough Fair." She heard Richie complaining. "What *the fuck* is that noise?" And, "Fuck, Sabrina, can't you shut her up?" Her mom tiptoed up the stairs and ducked her head into Eleanor's room.

(Rowell, 2013: 152)

In the above quotation, the words *the fuck* are used. These words which are used in the Emphatic Colloquial Interrogative *What the fuck is that noise?* inform that Eleanor's father, Richie, is very angry with her who is making a noise. His father even uses the word *fuck*, the **L** (low) variety of English, to show his anger to her mother, Sabrina. She then asks Eleanor to stop typing on the stairs.

The use of **L** (low) variety in the novel can also be found at the moment Eleanor, Tina, and Steve are having a serious conversation together. Tina and Steve tell Eleanor that her stepfather, Richie, is looking for her to do something bad to her. What has been said by Steve and Tina really disturbs her mind. She realizes that her father is always angry with her. She knows that her father does not like her very much. Steve tries to say that she does need to be afraid of her father. Eleanor listens to him and later she tells them that she has to leave them. This moment can be seen below.

Eleanor listened to Steve sing song after song over the wet hammer of heartbeat. The beer can went warm in her hand. She stood up. "I've got to get out of here." "God," Tina said. "Relax. He won't find you here. He's probably already at the Rail drinking it off." "No," Eleanor said. "He's going to kill me." It was true, she realized, even if it wasn't. Tina's face was hard. "So, where you *gonna* go?" "Away ..... I have to tell Park."

(Rowell, 2013: 284)

In the above quotation, it can be seen that Eleanor tells Steve and Tina that she has to leave them in a hurry. She is afraid that Richie, her stepfather, will find her if she does not go away soon. She decides to leave them in hurry because she thinks that it is very possible that stepfather will kill him if she is found by him in that place. Tina asks her where she will go. This can be described through the sentence "So, where you *gonna* go?" The word *gonna* which constitutes informal colloquial English is used by Tina instead of *are going to*. The situation at that time is very possible for Tina to use the **L** (low) variety of English.

In the other conversation in Steve's house, the **L** (low) variety of English is used by Steve, another character of the novel. He is Park's friend who likes to consume alcoholic drinks and smokes marijuana. Steve offers him to smoke it but he refuses to do it. Park directly meets Eleanor who is there together with Tina. He does not understand why Eleanor can be at Steve's house. He even suspects that Steve and Tina have kidnapped her. He ask Eleanor what has actually happened. She does not answer him, but Tina and Steve speak to him.

"Her stepdad is looking for her," Tina said. Tina was sitting on the arm the couch with her legs in Steve's lap. She took the joints from him. "Is that true?" Park asked Eleanor. She nodded into his chest. She wouldn't let him pull far enough away that he could look at her. "*Fucking* stepdads," Steve said. "*Motherfuckers*, all of them." He burst into laughter.

(Rowell, 2013: 286)

Through the conversation above, it can be seen that Steve uses words which are in the forms of **L** (low) varieties of English. They are actually not polite to be used in any condition or situation; however, Steve pronounces them because he does not like bad characters of many stepfathers. He does not like to see Eleanor's stepfather who does not like her and is trying to hurt her and makes her hide in his house. His hatred to see the characters of any stepfathers is shown by him through the uses of the words *Fucking* and *Motherfuckers* in *Fucking stepdads* and *Motherfuckers, all of them*. The uses of each of such taboo words are really impolite, and somebody who uses them means to show that he or she really does not like those to whom he or she mentions the words. In the quotation above, the hatred of Steve is aimed at Mr. Richie, Eleanor's father, and also all other stepfathers.

The other lexicons or words in the forms of **L** (low) varieties are found in the conversation between Park and his father. It happens early in the morning at about two a. m. He opens the door and is about to step out when his father calls his name and stops him. His father asks him where he wants to go. He says something honestly that he has to help Eleanor who plans to run away. He is just going to give her a ride to her uncle's house in Minnesota. He also tells his father that Eleanor's stepfather will hurt her. His father gets surprised to hear the address of her uncle's house. According to his father, Minnesota is far from their house. Therefore, his father gives him some amount of money and lends his truck to deliver or accompany her to go to Minnesota. Some parts of the conversation between Park and his father can be described through the quotation below.

“Where does her uncle live?” “Minnesota.” “Jesus F. Christ, Park,” his dad said in his normal voice, “are you serious?” “Dad,” Park stepped toward him, pleading. “She has to go. It is her stepdad. He’s ....” “Did he touch her? Because if he touched her, we’re calling the police.” “He writes her these notes.” “What kind of notes?” Park rubbed his forehead. He didn’t like to think about the notes....

“That little *fucker*.....” His dad looked down at the gun, then looked back at Park, rubbing his chin. “So you’re going to drive Eleanor to her uncle’s house. Will he take her in?” “She thinks so.” “I *gotta* tell you, Park, this doesn’t sound like much of a plan.”

(Rowell, 2013: 296)

In the above quotation, it can be seen that when hearing the explanation given by Park, his father becomes very emotional. He does not like to know such a treatment from Eleanor’s stepfather to her. His anger can be seen from the lexicon or word he uses to Park. The lexicon in the **L** (low) variety of English, that is, *fucker*, in the phrase *That little fucker* is used by Park’s father to show his anger to Eleanor’s stepfather. He even sees his gun but he does not touch it. Then, he thinks that he has to say something important because there will be something not good that will possibly happen to Eleanor. This can be described through the use of informal lexicon *gotta* in the sentence *I gotta tell you, Park, this doesn’t sound like much of a plan*. This can be meant that Park must be serious in overcoming Eleanor’s problem.

## 5. Conclusion

It can be concluded that, in the novel, the four topics discussed above, that is, function, prestige, grammar, and lexicon, are really used by some characters of the novel. They are used in different places and situations. In terms of *function*, the **H** (high) variety of English is functioned or used when one of the characters of the novel recites or reads a poem in front of the other students in the classroom. Because it is read in the H (high) variety, it is, of course, regarded something prestigious. Sentences used by a teacher, another character of the novel when speaking to his students, are grammatical English sentences. In other words, they are in the forms of **H** (high) variety of English. Nevertheless, in terms of *lexicons* or words, some of the characters of the novel use the **L** (low) varieties of English. Some of the forms of the lexicons used are very informal

and they are not polite to be used in formal places and situations. Their main purpose to use them is to show their anger or annoyance.

## References

- [1] Allen, R. E. (1990). *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- [2] Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- [3] Crystal, D. (1991). *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- [4] Ferguson, C. A. (1959). *Diglossia. Word*. In P. P. Giglioli (ed.) *Language and Social Context*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, pp. 325-40.
- [5] Fishman, J. A. (1967). Bilingualism with and without Diglossia: Diglossia with and without Bilingualism. *Journal of Social Issue*, vol. 23, issue 2, pp. 29 – 38.
- [6] Holmes, J. (2001). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London: Pearson Education Limited.
- [7] Varshney, R. L. (1998). *An Introductory Textbook of Linguistics & Phonology*. Bareilly: Student Store.
- [8] Wardhaugh, R. (1986). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. New York: Basil Blackwell Inc.