An Analysis of Profanity in English Lyrics

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ABSTRACT

This paper is designed to present results of an analysis of Profanity in English lyrics. The purpose of this qualitative study is to discover type of profane words used in English songs. According to Commercial Radio Malaysia (CRM), "17.7 million of Malaysia's population aged 10 years and above tune in to a radio daily" which indicates how music is easily to get access. 100 songs from Top 20 Billboard Hot 100 year 2009 until 2015were selected and analyzed in this paper. The results showed that profane words in the selected songs were falls under obscenity type with the highest frequency of 41% in the songs throughout the year. The results showed that this type of words generally found in Hip Hop, R&B and Pop genre compared to others.

Keywords: Profanity, Cultivation Theory, Objectification Theory and Social Cognitive Theory on Gender Development

1.   Introduction

The usage of profane words in media such as music, videos, film and television is no longer a new trend or issues in society. In fact, this type of word is used not just in conversation between two people but also in lyrics writing. These types of words are used to express emotions be it happy, sad or angry. To this day, lyrics writing has rapidly change its pattern and style from time to time according to the current trend in industry and demands from listeners. Even there are many initiative has been taken in order to censor the content however people still can get access to the song without censorship by downloading it on internet illegally where it leads people listen and expose with profane words used in the lyrics. Music plays an important element in students' life where they spend most of their time listen to it. Commercial Radio Malaysia (CRM) stated that "17.7 million of Malaysia's population aged 10 years and above tune in to a radio station daily." This indicates that, radio is one platform where people can easily get access to the music and radio plays the music frequently based on demands from the listener and current hits. Besides, normal youth tends to spend 1.5 to 2.5 hours per day to listens to music (Steven C. Martino, Rebecca L. Collins, March N. Elliot, Amy Strachman, David E. Kanouse, Sandra H. Berry, 2006). This shows that people especially young adults spend most of their time listen to music. In addition, Science Daily previous

research shown that teenagers aged 15 to 18 years old listens to music 2.4 hours daily (Science Daily, 2008). Thus, it is important to know and understand the usage of profane words in the lyrics so that people will understand the actual messages in the songs.

There are many past studies done relating to prevalence of meaning and usage of profane words in music however most of the studies mainly focus on specific genre of music yet there is little study has been made on understanding of profanity in English lyrics in popular music.

Music has existed more than 50 years and has gradually changed according to the advancement of technology and so does the lyrics writing pattern. From rock to ballad, lyrics writing have changed according to the demand from the consumers or listeners. The usage of profane words in song lyrics are no exception in popular music. This shows that, people enjoy listens to music without care about the lyrics content and words used in the song as long the music suits their mood. Usage of profane words is popular in media where it expresses strong emotions.

As a country that uses English as a second language, it is a must for each and every citizen to master English language and apply it in their lives. Thus, it is very important to really understand and master what we read, listen and write in the language. However, not most of second language users really understand the real meaning of the words used in the lyrics which contains inappropriate meaning even though Malaysia was ranked as one of best country to master English language skills (EF English Proficiency Index 2015). This indicates that, people are still listening to song that contains profane and misogyny words without really understand it. They listen to the lyrics without knowing the actual meaning of the words used in the lyrics; this problem gets even more crucial when many radio stations play the songs everyday repeatedly and in fact people are allow to request the song where there is no censorship on the lyrics content.

This problem always slips out of the way and not many concern has been arise like it is a normal to listen songs contains profane and misogyny lyrics publicly. Hence it is a major concern to the society where people especially students are still not aware of severity of the lyrics and listen to the songs as if it a normal thing and accepted by our culture. Much criticism and arguments has been made on profanity contents and how bad language is used in English lyrics from time to time.

Research on students understanding of profane words used in the lyrics is very important and crucial because they may not know and aware the actual meaning of the words in the songs. In fact, it helps society to avoid in using the words and from listening to songs that contains such words. This study focuses on content analysis of lyrics of songs according to Hot 100 Billboard charts from year 2010 to 2015.

Objective of this paper is to discover the type of profane word used in English lyrics. Analysis of profane word in English lyrics will indicate the function and types of swear word used in English lyrics which the results will help people to have better understanding on the meaning and function of profane words in the actual context of the songs.

2.   Previous Studies

Over time, profanity in English lyrics writing changed according to the trend of music and it has become even more explicit. Lyrics contain taboo words usually lead to inappropriate music videos which most likely promote negative behavior to the viewer. The need to understand the content is remarkably important so that people would not misuse words or phrases that they listen to.

2.1   Language usage in music

In linguistic study, language plays important roles in life. Human used language as a device to interact and communicate with each other. Linguistic is known as study of a language which covers language form, meaning and context. One of important element in linguistic study is language meaning where it requires study on semantics. Leech (1974) asserts that there are seven types of meaning in semantics all together; conceptual meaning which refers to the actual meaning of the words in dictionary meaning that indicates the concepts, connotative meaning associates words with word or emotion suggestions related to the word, social meaning is the usage of language used by society, affective meaning is communication based on speaker's feeling and attitude based on the context, reflected meaning is words that share more than one meaning at the same time, collocative meaning is usage of same words in different situation , and thematic meaning relates to words usage that connects with theme or topic.

Function of this type is based on the context which meaning refers to. It also indicates audience understanding towards the context. A context can be wrongly interpreted due to the factor of situational context which it can be literal meanings or connotative meanings (Tocharoen "A study of Figurative language used in the Composition of National Anthem"). According to Fromkin et al (2007), "situational context refers to non-linguistic features that contribute to the forming of whole meaning of the communication." Thus, a shared knowledge in the language is very important for the audience to gain understanding of the context as to successfully create effective communication among members. On top of that, according to McCarthy (1991), shared knowledge or experience helped build a relationship between the lyricist and audience. The bond of listeners and songs can be seen based on the demands and popularity of the songs in charts such as Billboard, Itunes and many other music charts. Interpretation of meaning related to listener social aspect such as ways of life, attitudes, beliefs, language and even music (Abercromble et al, 2000). In fact, this social aspect plays important roles in understanding of the context meaning in communication. Usage of figurative speech in lyrics can be hard to interpret and understand by the listener due to poor proficiency and knowledge of the language.

2.2   Usage of swear words in lyrics

Sexual content in popular music has been existed since 1920s and continuously present each day. According to Pardun L'Engle, and Brown (2005), music has the highest sexual contents compare to other media. This can be seen through the presence of extreme sexual music videos. Music and language related to one another which language is used as medium in lyrics writing to go along with the music. Language is a communication device for human to interact and music is one way for people to express their feelings and connected to one another. In sociolinguistic perpective, "language is a medium to social interaction in every society, regardless of location and time period (Ashley Crossman, 2014). Lyric is one way of communication where it delivers meaning to the listeners where music is known as language of emotion, (Machlis, 1995). According to study conducted by Daniel Levitin (2006), language used in the music is known as device for arousing feelings and emotions. Every words and phrases used in the songs play important role to engage with the listener. In songs, taboo or profanity words are usually used as to express strong emotion for example anger, madness that leads to violence. Taboo or profanity language is known as emotive language, where it is used to explain one's attitude (Mjung Lung, 2011). People used emotive language in song writing as to evoke emotions of the listener. The used of these words usually to express strong emotions like anger and sadness. In addition, these words also used in order to express the meaning of the actual lyrics and choices of profane words depend on the suitability of the context and beat of the music. Other than that, music style is determined by culture where different culture has its own style. According to Eaton (2003), listener selection of music is generally because of the beat of the music, meaning of the lyrics and artist involved in the music. In addition, lyrics pattern is determined according to the cultural circumstances that plays one of the reason why lyrics are written in such way (Citron, 2000). This explains differences between hip hop/rap music and pop songs based on selection of words in the lyrics. These occur based on the culture of the music genre which influences lyrics writing style.

        According to research done by Weizer and Kubrin, this language often appear in lyrics based on five criteria which are derogatory naming and shaming of women, sexual objectification of women, distrust of women, legitimating of violence against women and celebration of prostitution and pimping. These criteria explain reason why profane words are used in song. In the research also discovered that each element related to gender in society, demand in music world, conditions of disadvantaged in communities (2009). Weitzer and Kubrin discussed specifically on prevalence of misogynistic themes in Hip-Hop and Rap music and contents message conveyed to the listener. They discovered that each line of the song were identified carries a major misogynistic themes. The lyrics refers to condone, or objectification, exploitation or victimization of women. In addition, Weitzer and Kubrin revealed that male rappers derogate their opponents by feminized terms that lead to hegemonic masculinity. The result of this study discovered that majority songs used in the sample did not degrade women in nature and misogynistic messages to challenge one another and words used in the lyrics mainly form of masculinity.

        Based on research conducted by Behm-Morawitz (2014), among all genres in popular music, hip hop or rap music uses the most profane words compare to other genre. This study focused on the frequency of profanity in popular music based on the list from Top 100 charts by choosing the Top 50 charts of the most popular songs from 2006 to 2008. The findings from

this research revealed that profanity mainly found in hip hop or rap music that performed by male artist. Hip-hop and rap music contained lyrics which promote objectification, exploitation, and victimization of women compared to other genre. However, still there are not much groundwork done on the meaning of profanity words in the lyrics itself especially on second language user.

2.3   Function and types of swear words

Function of swear words in the lyrics is discussed based on study conducted by Wardhaugh (2006). There are four types of functions of taboo words which are first to draw attention to oneself – usage of strong and powerful words to attract attention from others which can draw immediate response from audience. Second, to show contempt to people by using swear words to insult others to address them as worthless and to be provocative which these words are used to provoke others to response to response in aggressive way. Lastly, as to mock authority where swearwords are used to express dissatisfied feelings towards authority. This study incorporates a study by Batistella (2005) which suggested that swear words are an offensive language. Her study stated there are for types of taboo words which are conceptualized as follows: (1) Epithet – Words or expressions that contains slurs of racial, ethnic, gender, sexual and appearance,(2) Profanity – Words used in religious expressions and anything associated with religion,(3) Vulgarity – Words or expressions using sexual anatomy and function of body parts and (4) Obscenity – Immoral words which prohibited to be used in public. For example, articles discussed on sexual activity and excretory functions.

2.4   Usage of sexual words in songs

Generally people listen to song which reflects to their emotions and feelings. For instance, people used song to express their feeling to someone that they love and care, to show their affection to one another. People listen to songs according to their emotion needs and feelings. However, usage of sexual words in music lyrics is one of the most common ways to express emotions and feelings of happy, anger or sad feelings. The most common study done on usage of sexual words mainly on rap music which most of the songs promotes violent and misogynic lyrics. Primack et al. (2009) – "two-thirds of sexual references are of a degrading in nature" whereas in research conducted by Monk Turner and Slyvertooth (2008), music such as rap and hip-hop music focused on specific theme like to show belongings and power over someone or situation which explains the usage of profane lyrics in popular songs. Based on research done by Weitzer and Kubrin (2009), they examined 403 songs only 13 songs were sung by women, out of 13 songs listed 8 songs contains dirty lyrics while in another case, one song described situation where their spouse cheated on them or past time of their partner. For example, dirty words such as "shit" and "damn" are used to show anger and dissatisfied. This matter related to previous research done by Carpentier et al. (2007), where the study shows that popular music from 1940s to now between 70% and 90% of songs were mainly on sex theme and it become "increasing explicit, focusing more on casual sex and sexual acts rather than romantic innuendo". All this past research also support the presence of songs such as "Pillow Talk by

Zayn Malik" and "Anaconda by Nicki Minaj" where profanity words are used to portray sex behavior. Profane words are used in writing the lyrics as if it is a normal word to address attention of the listener. This matter is crucial to be taken seriously so that any harm especially on behavior can be avoided in future.

Although the study critically addressed problems of lyrics contents dirty words and perceptions towards it, it does not focus on perception of listener towards racy lyrics of popular music. Many studies specifically focus on rap or hip-hop music where most of common songs in this genre used inappropriate language and content. This theme or genre represent influenced by the culture of black people which promotes vulgar images, degrading woman and misogynistic content.

2.5   Framework

As far as this issues is concern, understanding on the meaning is crucial and important where it will define someone's ability in understand English completely. It is important to have a deep understanding on the context so that misinterpretation on the context can be avoided. To receive a definite answer, sociolinguistics approach is used in this study where sociolinguistic is known as field which study relationship between people and language in society. This research is design to find answer two objectives of conducting the study; understanding of the actual meaning of the words in the lyrics and the function and types of profane words in the lyrics. This study combines theories on Cultivation Theory, Objectification Theory and Social Cognitive Theory on Gender Development

2.6   Cultivation Theory

According to Gerbner and Gross (1967), the longer human spend time with television the more it becomes invisible and real to them. This theory suggests that people with vast exposure to media content experience changes where they adopt or cultivate things they seen through media content or messages (Cohen & Weimann, 2000; Gerbner and Gross, 1967). Based study done by Ward (2011), cultivation theory also speculates that people whom expose with sexual contents has the highest tendency to adopt such behavior in real lives. Lyrical content with sexual activity and negative behavior most likely influence listeners to follow such behavior conveyed by the musicians (Knoblock-Westerwick et al, 2008). This theory leads to the formulation of a research question focused on students' perception on the use of profane words in the songs.

2.7   Objectification Theory

Objectification theory according to Fredickson and Roberts (1997) suggests that sexual objectification of women's bodies or body parts exposed through media teaches viewers to value it as for objects for pleasure and other use. This theory also proposes that media content teaches women to take outsiders' views on their body as objects which lead to self objectification. Culture of sexual objectification mainly channeled through media where people exposed to the content and accept the idea to adapt in their live. Sexual objectification can be inferred to sexual gazing. According to Fredrickson et al (1997), there are more than three

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ways where sexual objectification can be done through gazing. First, "through actual interpersonal encounters, through media representations of these types of encounters and through media that highlights women's bodies and body parts. This theory indicates that concepts of gender role especially women are affected which they are expected to acquire appearance according to ideas presented by the media compare to men (Barky, 1990). This indicates that women believe on the needs to have a good physical appearance for themselves and society (Fredrickson and Harrison, 2005). One study reveals that self objectification can highly influenced a person ability to gain and maintain their motivational state (Fredrickson et al, 1998). This leads to lack of confidence and desire to have good physical appearance according to the society ideas. Ultimately, mass media known as one of platform used to promote sexual content that brings the idea of sexual objectification between genders especially in music. In most cases, women are portrayed as objects and acts as inferior to men (Tuchman, 1978).

Based on research conducted by Weitzer and Kubrin (2009), 67% of content analysis of the hip hop/rap music selected in the research sexually objectified women where it refers to sex while men obtain power and more superior than the opposite gender. This study also indicates that women are less powerful and seen as sexual reference. Adams and Fuller (2006) assert that negative words used in misogyny lyrics to show hatred and disdain of women. The words used mainly to show power over women by using reference of sex and objects. Based on the research done by Bretthauer et al (2006), from 120 songs 22 of them consist of lyrics refers women as an objects. This study also finds that songs from year 1998 to 2003 contain six major themes in popular music. The sample taken from Billboard Hot 100 charts based on top 20 songs were identified to carried six themes that refers to "man and power, sex as the top priority for males, females defined by having a man, sexual violence, females devalue themselves, and the objectification of women."

2.8   Social Cognitive Theory on Gender Development

Social cognitive theory of gender development and differentiation by Bussey and Bandura (1999) introduced a framework to understand concept of gender and how exposure of mediated models affects ones' perspective and views concept of gender, influencing their beliefs and attitudes about gender. This theory specifically argues "the development and differentiation of gender transpires through the reciprocal and bidirectional influences occurring between three factors: personal, behavioral and environmental." Based on the three factors introduced by author explain that personal refer to "gender-related cognitions, judgmental standards, and self-regulatory influences such as thoughts, evaluations, and decision making whereas for behavioral factors explains how "overt action linked to gender". Environmental factors refer to "the numerous social influences experienced in every day interactions." Hence, it can be seen that the media plays important roles in convey information on gender roles to the listeners. Gender always portrayed through media where it represents gender according to social roles which appeals to the society.

This research incorporates qualitative method where content analysis is applied in order to gather the data while questionnaire as a support data. Qualitative suits the needs of the study which it requires researcher to analyzed the lyrics. According to Creswell (1994), "qualitative method is a holistic approach and it described situation occurs in a natural setting that enables

researcher to be engaged in the actual experiences". In addition, this method builds inductive reasoning based on observation by the researcher. This paper incorporates content analysis study where the material analyzed and formed it in a frequency. This method was chosen due to the needs of the study. Thus, by employed qualitative research the data can be represented in the form of percentage and words for a clear explanation.

3.   The Study

In the previous research, the studies were conducted mainly on analyzing lyrical contents of the music rather than discover on the type of words and number of times of profane word appears in English songs. Thus, this study focuses on analysis of the lyrics in order to reveal type of words and number of times of profane word used in the songs.

This study was designed to analyze on profanity lyrics in English song based on popular music. All lyrics were collected from Metro Lyrics (www.metrolyrics.com) which provide information of the artist, the lyrics from first album to the latest in writing forms and it also provide audio of each song. As for the songs, the data were collected through Billboard Hits 100 by focusing on 20 top songs in the list for each year. This study focused on list of 20 top artists that made it into Billboard Hits 100 based on the year 2009 to 2015 which has not been investigated by previous research. The samples were determined according to the content of the lyrics and popular demands by the listeners.

In order to find a song which fits the requirement researcher has chosen to select songs from Billboard Hot 100 lists where it contains list of current popular music. The study focused on songs which have been listed on Billboard Hot 100 within seven years. Billboard are known as a magazine which measured song for its popularity on radio airplay, online streaming (for example; YouTube) activity, physical CD sales and digital downloads ("Billboard Hot 100"), Cundiff (2013). The analysis used qualitative methods in order to analyze the lyrics content. Many past research mainly focused on lyrical contents, terms used in a specific genre of music while other mainly studies focused mainly on music genre such as Rap and Hip-Hop music whilst not much research done on second language user understand towards the lyrics meaning.

3.1   Data

A total of 20 songs from each year will be analyzed according to the usage of profanity words in the lyrics content. Two categories of data are used which are song lyrics and lists of songs of 20 top songs will be used in this study. The data will be supported with surveys as mentioned earlier.

The source of the data obtained from Metro Lyrics which is a site that compiled song lyrics and information regarding on the artist. Only songs that made it into top 20 in the Billboard Hot 100 lists will be chosen and analyzed. The lyrics of the song will be in writing format and the focus was on lyrics that contain profane words. All the data came originally from Billboard Hot 100 and Metro Lyrics where it provided all the data needs for this study.

For content analysis, the researcher gathers lyrics based on the 20 top songs from Billboard Hot 100. The lyrics will be analyzed and transcribed to identify profane words in the songs. These

words will be analyzed according to words phrases that contain profane words. Since the study incorporates qualitative, this paper will only focus on songs based on popularity and ranking in the chart.

3.2 Data collection of this study comprise as follows:

a) A total 100 music lyrics based on top 20 songs based on Billboard Hot 100 lists of seven years were selected for content analysis. The data sorted according to the frequency of profane words, name of the artist, date of song released and genre of the music.

Content Analysis of Song Lyrics

Content analysis of song lyrics will be based on content of profane language. The song lyrics will be analyzed according to the words. The words will be sorted according to the usage of profanity. The selected words will be sort into two categories as to identify the usage of words according to the types of swear words. Each words identified will be divided according to swear words lists, repetition of profane word used in the song, year song released and genre music. Other than that, the words will be categorized according to four types of taboo words according to Batistella (2005) which are epithet, profanity, vulgarity and obscenity.
Four types of taboo words:

i) Epithet - Words or expressions that contains types slurs which related to racial, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and appearance of a person. Example of words used nigga, bitch, fucker, motherfucker, cunt, and hoe.
ii) Profanity – Words used in religious expressions and anything associated with religion. For example Christ, Oh my god, Goddamn, damn, and hell.
iii) Vulgarity – Words or expressions using sexual anatomy and function of body parts. Example of words that mainly associated with this type such as b**bs, a*s, b**t, c**t, and d**k.
v) Obscenity – Immoral words or expressions which prohibited to be used in public which related to sex or sexual anatomy and human internal function. For instance s**t, f**k, b*****
d, popsicle and buns.

4. Findings

The results are presented according to profane words used in the lyrics, frequency of profane words used, year the song released and genre of the music. Table 4.1 presents the results of type and highest frequency of swear words used in English songs' lyrics. The data focused on top five lists of highest numbers of word appear in song according to the genre.

Table 4.1 Frequency of Profane Words used in English Song Lyrics 2009

Word	Repetition	Year of the song	Genre Music
H**l	26	2009	Punk Pop
S**t	16	2009	Hip Hop
N word	7	2009	Hip Hop
F**l	4	2009	Rock

Table 4.1 shows the results based on frequency of profane words appear in English lyrics according to Billboard Hot 100 lists for 2009. The table shows that there are five words which contain the highest number of repetition of profane words compare to other songs. Word *'H**l'* (26) has the highest repetition of profane words where it appears for 26 times in a song while word *'S**t'* (16) occurs 16 times where 8 times in one song. This can be seen that, song with Punk Pop genre have the highest usage of profane words compared to other genre in 2009. Other than that, the result shows that word *'N'* word (7) appears seven times in hip hop or rap music genre while word 'F**l' (4) was found at a count of four in Rock genre. According to the result presented in the table, it can be seen that three out of five songs listed share the same music genre which is Hip Hop or Rap music.

Table 4.2 Frequency of Profane Words used in English Song Lyrics 2010-2011

Word	Repetition	Year of the song	Genre Music
S**t	6	2010	Pop & Hip Hop
N word	3	2010	Pop & Hip Hop
F**k	3	2010	Hip Hop
Popsicle	3	2010	Funk/Disco
F**k	23	2011	Pop & Hip Hop
D**n	5	2011	Rock, Folk & Pop
S**t	5	2011	Pop
A**	4	2011	Pop

According to Billboard Hot 100 for year 2010, the highest repetition of profane words used in the lyrics for top 20 songs are *'S**t'* (6) which appears for six times in Pop and Hip Hop while as for word *'N'* word (3), *'F**k'* (3) and *'Popsicle'* (3) shared the same results and these words were found present for three times in the lyrics. *'N'* word in the lyrics were identified in two different genre which are pop and hip hop different than in the year of 2009 where *'N'* word found in hip hop genre. Other than that, word *'f**k'* (3) appears in Hip Hop while word *'popsicle'* (3) in Funk and Disco genre. Moving on to the year 2011, word *'F**k'* has the highest repetition of 23 times in both Pop and Hip Hop genre. This word appears as the highest frequency compared to other year. While word *'D**n'* (5) and *'S**t'* (5) shared the same results of repetition however both word were used in different genre; Rock, Folk and Pop. As for the word *'A**'* (4) appears only for four times in one song from Pop genre. Hence, this can be seen that pattern for frequency usage of profane words in a song appears differently in terms of genre and word for each year.

Table 4.3 Frequency of Profane Words used in English Song Lyrics 2012-2013

Word	Repetition	Year of the song	Genre Music
N word	11	2012	Hip Hop
F**k	10	2012	Hip Hop, Pop
Motherf*****s	9	2012	Pop
S**t	8	2012	Funk/Disco
B****es	6	2012	Pop & Hip Hop
S**t	13	2013	Hip Hop, Pop
H**l	11	2013	Hip Hop, Pop
A**	6	2013	Pop, R&B
D**n	5	2013	Hip Hop, Pop
B***h	4	2013	Hip Hop & R&B

Table 4.3 presents result for year 2012 and 2013. In 2012, usage of *'N'* word (11) has the highest number of repetition and the genre for this word is Hip Hop while word *'F**k'*(10) comes in second place with 10 times word repeated in Hip Hop and Pop genre. The data also

reveals new addition of profane word used in lyrics which is *'Motherf*****s'* (9) for nine times in one song under Pop genre. Based on the data, word *'S**t'* frequently appear in song lyrics for five consecutive year and on 2012 *'S**t'* (8) was used frequently in lyrics in Funk or Disco genre. Furthermore, the results shows usage of *'B*****s'* (6) for the first time in top five rank for 2012. This word was found in lyrics from Hip Hop and Pop genre. As for 2013, *'H**l'* (11) was the highest word used in the lyrics in Hip Hop and Pop genre. The frequency of the word appear in lyrics are less in number compared to 2009 where the word appear 26 times in one song. Next, *'A**'* (6) shows a high number of appearance in 2013 in Pop and R&B while *'D**n'* (5) appears for five times in Hip Hop and Pop genre. The result from the data shows that *'B***h'* (4) was frequently used in the song in Hip Hop and R&B genre compared to 2012 where it has the most number of frequencies.

Table 4.4Frequency of Profane Words used in English Song Lyrics 2014 – 2015

Word	Repetition	Year of the song	Genre Music
B***y	7	2014	Pop Rap, Pop
B****es	2	2014	Hip Hop, Pop
D**n	2	2014	Pop
F**k	2	2014	Hip Hop
F**k	17	2015	Hip Hop, R&B
D**n	11	2015	Hip Hop, Pop
S**t	2	2015	Hip Hop, Pop
H**	2	2015	Hip Hop
B***h	2	2015	Hip Hop & R&B

In 2014, the highest word used in English lyrics was *'B***y'* (7) under Pop Rap and Pop genre while *'B*****s'* was found in Hip Hop and Pop genre with a frequencies of two. The word appears in each genre once. Then word *'D**n'* (2) was identified to be appear twice in one song with Pop genre which shared the same number of repetition for *'F**k'* (2) that was found in Hip Hop genre. Interestingly, in 2015 the result shows that word *'f**k'* with the highest number of frequencies in Hip Hop and R&B genre; 17 times. The word used in the same genre R&B for 15 times while remaining was found in Hip Hop where the word was used only in one song of respective genre. Next, the second highest was *'D**n'* where it appears for 11 times in

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two songs for Hip Hop and Pop genre. This word shows a high usage compared from the past six years. There are three words found which shared the same number of repetition; *'S**t'*, *'H**'* and *'B***h'*. The word was identified in Hip Hop, Pop and R&B genre respectively in 2015. Overall, the highest profane word used in English lyrics for 2014; *'B***y'* with 7 times and *'F**k'* for 2015 with 17 times.

4.1 Function and Categories of Swear Words in English Lyrics

This part discuss and presents the function and types of swear words found in English lyrics from year 2009 to 2015 based on top 20 songs from Billboard Hot 100 lists . The data will be presented in table format according to the category of swear words which contains word, frequency and percentage.
Table 4.5 presents the category of Swear words in English lyrics based on study conducted by Batistella (2005) which is Epithet.

Table 4.5 Wordlist, Frequency and Percentage for Epithet Category

Epithet		
Word	Frequency	%
N****s	31	49%
B***h	15	23%
Motherf****r	15	23%
H*e	4	6%
Total	65 times	100%

Table 4.5 shows result of wordlist with frequency or numbers the each word appear and percentage for Epithet category. The result presented in the table was based on English song lyrics of Top 20 Billboard Hot 100 of year 2009 to 2015. In this category, word *'N***a'* was identified the highest frequency with 31 times which shows that 49% of the lyrics contains Epithet category for seven consecutive year. Other than that, word *'B***h'* was placed second with 15 times presents in the song. Same number of frequency can be seen occur with word *'Motherf****r'* which it appears for 15 times while *'H**'* only occurs for four times in this category. This can be seen that word N was used frequently compared to other word in the list and only four words appear in the lyrics were identified as Epithets.

Table 4. Wordlist, Frequency and Percentage for Profanity Category

Profanity		
Word	Frequency	%
H**l	45	62%
D**n	28	38%
Total	73	100%

As for profanity, only two words were identified under this category. 62% of the lyrics contains word *'H**l'* with highest frequency while word *'D**n'* appears for 28 times in all the lyrics (38%). These two words appear mostly in Hip Hop and Pop genre.

Table 4.7 Wordlist, Frequency and Percentage for Vulgarity Category

Vulgarity		
Word	Frequency	%
A*s	15	48
B***y	8	23
B**t	5	14
P***y	4	11
P***s	1	3
B*****s	1	3
C**k	1	3
Total	35	100%

In this category, word *'A**'* (15) resulted as the highest number of words appear in the lyrics compare to other word. This word represents 48% out of 100% of the lyrics for this category. Next, *'B***y'* (23%) was found 8 times in the lyrics while word *'B**t'* only five times (14%). Then, word *'P***y'* was found as one of word with 4 times frequencies which appear in the lyrics (11%). There were three words which appears once and reported as the lowest words used in the lyrics; *'P***s'*, *'B*****s'* and *'C**k'* (3%).

Table 4.8 Wordlist, Frequency and Percentage for Obscenity Category

Obscenity		
Word	Frequency	%
F**k	61	44%
S**t	52	37%
S*x	9	6%
F**l	8	6%
P**p	4	3%
N***y	3	2%
S****d	1	1%
D**b	1	1%
Total	139	100%

The highest word frequently appear in the lyrics was *'F**k'* with 61 (44%) while word *'S**t'* comes in second place with 52 times (37%). These two terms were used repeatedly in the lyrics. In third place, word *'S*x'* was found in the song with nine times (6%) *'F**l'* was found

eight times (6%) repeatedly appear in the lyrics. Next, word *'P**p'* was found in the lyrics with a count of 3 (2%). There were two terms found in the lyrics; *'S****d'* and *'D**b'* that shared the same number of frequency of 1 (1%).

5. Conclusion

The objective of this paper is to analyze profanity in English lyrics focused on type of swear words used. This paper also investigates specifically the frequency of profane word used on song lyrics of Top 20 Billboard Hot 100 lists. The results were analyzed based on four types of swear words which are epithet, profanity, vulgarity and obscenity. These category represents different function of swear word according to the context and word used. Overall, the results show words falls under obscenity has the highest frequency compared to other category. This can be seen in the category where word *'F**k'* with a count of 61 (44%) has frequently appear in the lyrics starting year 2010 to 2015. The findings suggest that this word is used in three different music genre; Hip Hop, R&B and Pop. In addition, word *'F**k'* has the highest word used within Hip Hop genre compared to other genre. Other than that, the findings also reveal that Hip Hop/Rap music used the most swear words of *'F'* word in lyrics writing.

Early research in this area find that hip hop and rap music has the highest usage of profane words compare to other genre and the content mostly refers to sex. However, there is not much research done on the type of profane words used in the English lyrics based on the categories of swear words. The research conducted shown that every year the usage of profane words has increasing and found easily in any genre of music. It can be seen that each year from 2009 to 2015 there are different swear word and genre found in the song. The study expected to found numbers of swear words falls under profanity type however the results shows differently. The results based on four types of swear words and the highest type of word used in the English lyrics were found under obscenity compared to other category. According to the category or type, the word *'f**k'* was found has the highest number of frequency with a count of 61 (44%) and the word mainly used in hip hop/rap music. This word used to indicate strong emotion and mainly used to express anger. This type of word was found as taboo and prohibited to be used in public as suggested by Batistella (2005). In addition, the F word in the lyrics also approves the function of swear words by Wardhaugh (2006) where the word used to draw attention to oneself, to be provocative, and to mock authority. Many of the songs were found used swear words according to the function stated. This study also suggests that F word was found used in three different genres; Hip Hop, R&B and Pop. Hence, this study also supports earlier research by Behm-Morawitz (2014), hip hop or rap music contains the highest usage of swear words in popular music compared to other genre. The genre of rap music continued to represent the highest usage of profane words compared to other genre which supports the argument from Citron (2000), where culture circumstances influenced lyrics writing style which explains the reason of the findings on F word in the lyrics. In conclusion, the results shows that obscenity was found as the highest type of swear word, and hip hop or rap music was identified as the genre music with high numbers of swear word used in English lyrics.

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