

Sociolinguistics Study of Swear Words Found in Songs from Album “The Sailor” 2019 by Rich Brian

Kajian Sociolinguistik terhadap Penggunaan Kata Kasar dalam Lirik Lagu Album “The Sailor” 2019 Karya Rich Brian

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<p>Keywords: Rap Songs, Sociolinguistics, Swear Words</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Abstract</p> <p><i>This research examines the use of swear words found in the lyrics of songs from album “The Sailor” 2019 by Rich Brian. It employs qualitative analysis to categorize and explore swear words, using frameworks by Wardhaugh (2006) for classification and Rothwell (1973) for purposes. Seven profanity categories are identified as mother-in-law, animal, sex, death, excretion, bodily function, and religious matters. The study uncovers five purposes for profanity use in the songs: to get attention, to discredit someone or something, to provoke, to create interpersonal identification, to provide catharsis. Analyzing 89 instances, 11 profanity types are found, with "fuck" being most frequent (35 times). The prevalent purpose is to “provide catharsis.” Swear words’ presence underscores its societal significance, revealing diverse meanings based on users and contexts. This research illuminates sociolinguistic aspects of rap songs and swear words’ role in today’s society.</i></p>
<p>Kata Kunci: Kata Kasar, Lagu Rap, Sociolinguistik</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Abstrak</p> <p>Penelitian ini menganalisis penggunaan kata-kata kasar yang ditemukan dalam lirik lagu dari album "The Sailor" 2019 oleh Rich Brian. Penelitian ini menggunakan analisis kualitatif untuk mengkategorikan dan mengeksplorasi kata-kata kasar, dengan menggunakan teori Wardhaugh (2006) untuk klasifikasi dan Rothwell (1973) untuk tujuan. Terdapat 7 kategori kata kasar seperti mertua, hewan, seks, kematian, ekskresi, fungsi tubuh, dan masalah keagamaan. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan lima tujuan penggunaan kata-kata kasar dalam lagu-lagu tersebut: untuk menarik perhatian, mencoreng seseorang atau sesuatu, memprovokasi, menciptakan identifikasi antarpribadi, dan memberikan katarsis. Dengan menganalisis 89 contoh, ditemukan 11 jenis kata-kata kasar, dengan kata "fuck" menjadi yang paling sering muncul (35 kali). Tujuan yang paling umum adalah "memberikan katarsis." Keberadaan kata-kata kasar ini menggarisbawahi signifikansi sosialnya, mengungkapkan makna yang beragam berdasarkan pengguna dan konteksnya. Penelitian ini menekankan aspek sociolinguistik dalam lagu rap dan peran kata-kata kasar dalam masyarakat saat ini.</p>

INTRODUCTION

Wardhaugh (2006) stated that sociolinguistics is the study of language in relation to society, whereas the sociology of language is the study of society in relation to

language. The expression of language has many varieties related to society. Then, the result of language implied by people can be found in song, poet, novel, and etc. as the expression of how people deliver message to each other by media of entertainment. In this study will only analyze songs especially in rap genre, because in genre of rap there are a lot of use of swear words can be analyzed.

Rap genre is a musical form of vocal delivery that incorporates rhyme, rhythmic speech, and street vernacular, performed or chanted in a variety of ways, usually over a backing beat or musical accompaniment. The components of rap include "content" (what is being said), "flow" (rhythm, rhyme), and "delivery" (cadence, tone). Rap differs from spoken-word poetry in that it is usually performed off time to musical accompaniment. Rap being a primary ingredient of hip hop music, it is commonly associated with that genre in particular; however, the origins of rap predate hip-hop culture by many years. Rap is usually delivered over a beat, typically provided by a DJ, turntablist, beatboxer, or performed a cappella without accompaniment. Stylistically, rap occupies a gray area between speech, prose, poetry, and singing. The word, predates the musical form, originally meant to lightly strike, and is now used to describe quick speech or repartee.

In rap genre the musician usually express madness, sadness and happiness in swear words as the songs have various meaning. Swear words do not only come out when people got mad or upset of something or someone. There is a lot of way to express our feelings to others. We can use positive words when we want to tell our gratitude or appreciate towards them, or maybe there is another way to express our rage or just a silly side of us, when we using swear words lyrics. According to Karjalainen (2002:18) a lay person might think that all use of taboo words or words that refer to taboo is swearing, and although all swear words are taboo, not all taboo words are swear words. Because taboo words used for swearing is the words that relation with swear words, not all taboo words used in swear words.

Swear words are always interesting to people who study language and society. They create arguments and raise important issues. Moore (2012) defines swear words as rude and disrespectful language. Wardhaugh (2006) sorted swear words into seven types, like those about family, animals, death, and more. Take Rich Brian's song "Drive Safe" from the 2019 album "The Sailor." In it, the word "fuck" is used to strongly talk about leaving the past behind, even though it usually means something sexual. This shows that swear words can be used for strong emphasis. Rothwell (1973) says people use swear words for five reasons: to get attention, put others down, provoke, connect with others, or let out emotions. So, swear words have different uses than just their literal meanings. For example, in this study will analyze one phrase of Rich Brian's lyrics song entitled Drive Safe from Album "The Sailor" 2019 is "**Fuck** all the good times it's a past tense". The word "**fuck**" is referred to provide catharsis. The singer wants to show his feeling of anger to something he felt in the past event. Rich Brian's Songs from album "The Sailor" 2019 will be analyzed to find phenomenon swear words in this study. The phenomenon is to find swear words in Rich Brian's songs from album "The Sailor" 2019. The first, what are types of swear words in rap songs and second, what are the function of swear words that used in rap songs.

In the present day, a considerable number of songs containing explicit language have gained prominence in society. This trend is particularly pronounced in the digital age, where individuals can conveniently access music through social media and online platforms. As a result, the writer's interest has been piqued regarding the significance of swear words used within song lyrics. This study topic has been chosen with the aim of exploring the various types of swear words that surface in songs and understanding their

underlying purposes. The selection of this subject is motivated by a desire to delve into the categories and intentions behind the utilization of explicit language in music. Rap songs have been specifically singled out for examination due to their tendency to incorporate a higher frequency of swear words compared to other music genres.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research approach to thoroughly investigate the utilization of swear words in songs from album “The Sailor” 2019 by Rich Brian comprises 12 rap songs. Sourced from official YouTube channels linked with Rich Brian and 88rising, this album is purposefully chosen due to its contextual significance. Rich Brian's identity as an Asian rapper from Indonesia offers a distinct perspective that resonates with the sociolinguistic focus of the research. Furthermore, the prevalence of explicit language, notably swear words, within rap songs renders this album particularly relevant for analysis.

The data collection process adopts a meticulous three-step procedure. Data collection involves listening to the songs, transcribing lyrics with timestamps of swearing occurrences, and systematically identifying instances of swearing. Qualitative data analysis follows, including transcription, categorization, tabulation, and scrutiny through relevant theories. This approach aligns with the sociolinguistic nature of the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

According to Wardhaugh's (2006) typology of swear words, this study identifies all seven proposed types: mother in-law, animal, sex, bodily function, excretion, death, and religious matters. Among the 11 swear words examined in this research—such as fuck, shit, bitch, dick, kill, motherfucker, suck, damn, hell, ass, sex—'fuck' stands out as the most frequently occurring, appearing 35 times throughout the entire album.

Table 1. Types of Swear Words Found in Album “The Sailor” 2019 by Rich Brian

No	Swear Words	Types of Swear Words	Frequency of Data Occurrence
1	Fuck	Sex	35 times
2	Shit	Excretion	26 times
3	Bitch	Mother in-law	13 times
4	Dick	Bodily function	5 times
5	Kill	Death	4 times
6	Motherfucker	Mother in-law	3 times
7	Suck	Sex	2 times
8	Damn	Death	1 time
9	Hell	Death	1 time
10	Ass	Bodily function	1 time
11	Sex	Sex	1 time

As per Rothwell's (1973) theory, swear words serve five distinct purposes: attracting attention, discrediting individuals or objects, provoking reactions, establishing interpersonal connections, and providing emotional release. Among these five purposes,

the intent to provide catharsis emerges as the most prevalent, occurring 39 times within the dataset.

Table 2. Purposes Swear Words Found in Album “The Sailor” 2019 by Rich Brian

No	Purposes of Using Swear Words	Frequency of Data Occurrence
1	To provide catharsis	39 times
2	To get attention	32 times
3	To provoke	14 times
4	To discredit something or someone	2 times
5	To create interpersonal identification	2 times

DISCUSSION

The outcomes reveal that the theories put forth by Wardhaugh (2006) and Rothwell (1973) effectively apply in identifying both the types and purposes of swear words present in the songs album “The Sailor” 2019 by Rich Brian. The ensuing discussion elaborates on the varieties and intentions of these swear words within the songs.

1) Types of Swear Words

Wardhaugh (2006) introduced seven categories of swear words, and these will be employed to identify the swear words present in the songs from album “The Sailor” 2019 by Rich Brian, here are the point of the discussion connecting with the song lyrics:

a. “*Hit up record stores to see if my new **shit** has sold out yet*”

In the lyrics provided, the word "shit" is used as a swear word, falls under the excretion category according to Wardhaugh (2006). Excretion refers to human’s excretion.

b. “*Woke up with a **bitch**, we didn’t have a conversation, man*”

The swear word "bitch" is used, falls under the category of mother-in-law type according to Wardhaugh's (2006) theory. Mother in-law is addressed to women who are described as mischievous women.

c. “*That **pussy** gon’ make me wan’ fight*”

The swear word is *pussy* belongs to the bodily function term category according to Wardhaugh (2006) theory. Bodily function refers to sexual organ of human.

d. “*Told her “Don’t **fuck** me” cause this **shit** get sentimental fast*”

There are two swear words used in one line. The first swear word is *fuck* belongs to the sex term category according to Wardhaugh (2006) theory. Sex is a term that refers to sexual activities. Excretion refers to human’s excretion.

e. “*Will I make it? Who the **hell** knows?*”

Those are a piece of lyrics from Yellow song. Swear word *hell* refers to death term based on Wardhaugh (2006) theory. Death refers to something that make people afraid.

f. “*Oh, she ‘bout to **suck** me dry, I need me some pedalyte*”

Those are a piece of lyrics from 100 Degrees song. The swear word *suck* belongs to sex term according to the theory that stated by Wardhaugh (2006). Sex is a term that refers to sexual activities. Excretion refers to human’s excretion.

g. “***Ass** fat, she needs attitude fixin’*”

The swear word *ass* refers to bodily function based on Wardhaugh (2006) theory. Bodily function refers to sexual organ of human.

h. “*I can’t have you talk to me about no **mothafuckin’** limit*”

In the lyrics appears swear word *mothafuckin’* or *motherfuckers* belongs to mother in-law term based on Wardhaugh (2006) theory. Mother in-law is addressed to women who are described as mischievous women.

i. “***Damn**, this is easy, but baby, I’m gon’ run ‘em*”

The swear word *damn* belongs to death term based on Wardhaugh (2006) theory. Death refers to something that make people afraid.

- j. *“Oh, you mean smart and funny and has a big **dick**”*

Wardhaugh (2006) stated that there are several types of swear words classified into several terms, and the swear word *dick* is classified into bodily function term. Bodily function refers to sexual organ of human.

- k. *’bout to get suit up, ready fore more **sex**”*

Swear word *sex* refers to sex term based on Wardhaugh (2006) theory. Sex is a term that refers to sexual activities.

- l. *“Watching your body **kill** all my dreams”*

The swear word *kill* refers to death term based on Wardhaugh (2006) theory. Death refers to something that make people afraid.

2) Purposes of Swear Words

Rothwell (1973) laid out five purposes that pertain to the usage of swear words within a sociolinguistic context, those are: to get attention, to discredit someone or something, to provoke, to create interpersonal identification, and to provide catharsis. This theory will now be employed to discern the intentions behind the incorporation of swear words in the song lyrics from album “The Sailor” 2019 by Rich Brian as outlined below:

- a. *“Started off as the sailor, look at me, now I’m the caption I won’t lie, this **shit** is fun”*

In the given lyrics above, the purpose of using swear word *shit* is to get attention from the listeners. It can be seen as a form of linguistic style or register that resonates with specific audiences.

- b. *“Hit up record stores to see if my new **shit** has sold out yet”*

The purpose of using the swear word "shit" in this context seems to be to discredit someone or something. Rich Brian uses it to express his disappointment with the lack of appreciation for his previous album.

- c. *“Told her “Don’t **fuck** me” cause this **shit** get sentimental fast”*

According to Rothwell's (1973) theory, the purpose of using both *fuck* and *shit* in this line is to provoke. The lyrics suggest that Rich Brian wants to show the person trying to provoke him that he is not an ordinary person and has a bad temperament.

- d. *“Woke up with a **bitch**, we didn’t have a conversation, man”*

As Rothwell (1973) suggested, the purpose of using the swear word "bitch" in the lyric is to create interpersonal identification. In this particular lyric, Rich Brian uses the word "bitch" to give a specific identity to the girl he slept with last night.

- e. *“**Fuck** all the good times, it’s a past tense”*

Rothwell (1973) stated that there are several purposes of using swear words, in the given lyrics the use of swear word *fuck* is to provide catharsis. In the given lyrics, the swear word *fuck* serve as the intensifiers and expressions of frustration or dismissal.

CONCLUSION

The study addresses swear word classifications based on Wardhaugh (2006) and the purposes of swearing according to Rothwell (1973) in sociolinguistics. Findings show 7 categories of swear words: mother-in-law, animals, sex, death, excretion, bodily functions, and religious terms. The album "The Sailor 2019" contains 88 swear words across 12 songs. "Fuck" is the most common sex-related term, while "hell" and "damn"

are least common, falling under death-related terms. "Ass" and "sex" are also infrequent, categorized as bodily function and sex-related terms. Swear words serve various functions including to get attention, to provoke, to discredit someone or something, to create interpersonal identification, and to provide catharsis. The album predominantly employs swearing to provide catharsis, expressing emotions like anger and excitement.

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