



## **AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH SLANG WORDS USED IN EMINEM'S RAP MUSIC**

**Rani Evadewi<sup>1</sup>, Jufrizal<sup>2</sup>**

English Department

Faculty of Languages and Arts

Universitas Negeri Padang

email: [Ranievadewi27@gmail.com](mailto:Ranievadewi27@gmail.com)

### **ABSTRACT**

Slang is the informal language which is used in a particular group of people especially used by teenagers in their activities to communicate each other. This research paper aimed to identify the characteristics of slang and the dominance slang used in Eminem songs. This research paper used Abadi's (2009, p.17) theory about the characteristics of slang. This study used qualitative approach with descriptive method. The writer found that the total data of slangs in Eminem songs were 47 slangs. There were 13 data of creativity, 27 data of flippant, 5 data of fresh, and 2 data of onomatopoeic. The most dominance slang used in Eminem songs is Flippant.

**Keywords:** *slang, characteristic of slang, semantic, Eminem.*

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Song generally conveys message and meanings. A composer needs time to think, to choose the words and reads what she or he writes, that is to rethink, revise and arrange it. Then he or she considers the effect to the listener. Songs have special characteristic in their lyric. Each lyric is created to have nuance. . By listening to a song we often find the lyrics which mean the words that used in the song and the lyrics itself have something meaningful. Lyrics can include a series of verses, the longer sections of the song that tell the story, and a refrain, a short phrase repeated at the end of every verse. Songs can have a simple structure of one or two verses, or a more complex one with multiple verses and refrains.

There are a lot of types of music, and Hip Hop is one of them. Since the emergence of rap music in the late-1970s, people have become increasingly

---

<sup>1</sup> English ELLSP of English Department of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang graduated on March 2018

<sup>2</sup> Lecturer of English Department of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang



interested in rap music, and also the hip-hop culture from which it derives (Rose 1994, Walser 1995, Krims 2000, Keyes 2002, Mitchell 2002). Rap music, according to Keyes (2005), is a symbol in itself of success to inner-city youth. Rap is usually delivered over a beat, typically provided by a DJ, turntablist, Beatboxer, or performed A capella without accompaniment. Stylistically, rap occupies a gray area between speech, prose, poetry, and singing.

Unlike the general English songs, the lyrics of Rap music's mostly have vulgar meaning which is defenetely different from other usual English songs. However, there are more less similarities and differences among them. Like the Eminem songs that tell human activity, loves has plagued, and sneaky lyrics. In those Eminem songs the sentences structure and the choice of word not only push forward imaginative quality but follows the reality of life. This rap music mostly uses non-standard English which tends to be vulgar, lazy pronunciation and it is often said as bad, incorrect and poor English. Mostly some of the words in the lyric are slang words.

The writer chose Eminem songs, because Eminem songs have many slang that can be analyzed. The examples of slang words taken from the lyric of song by Eminem; "There's so many other *motherfuckers* that just are. Eminem used the "*motherfuckers*" as a call for his enemies. Basically "motherfucker" is a noun that can represent any persons, places or things. But in this case, Eminem uses "motherfucker" to represent his enemies.it has irrelevant word of the contexts.

According to Abadi (2009, p.17), there are 4 characteristics of slang such as creativity, flippant, fresh, and onomatopoeic. Those kind of characteristics of slang can be found in Eminem songs. The lyric of Eminem song mostly used slang words. The uneducated and working class people, such as any occupation group of workers, peasants, tramps and criminal breakers usually use it. Slang is not supposed to be spoken at school, holy place, law court offices, and any other official places. In this paper, the writer tries to identify the characteristics of slang and the dominance slang which used in Eminem songs. The songs are *bully, I'm not afraid*.and *no love*.

There are at least two reasons why the writer wants to analyze the slang in Eminem songs. Firts, the writer wants to know the characteristics of slang in Eminem songs, because Eminem used many kind of slang which have contrast meaning from real life. Second, the writer wants to see the common slang in Eminem's song. Hence, by analyzing, the writer needed better understanding in the meaning of the song from Eminem.

This research was limited the study into semantic point of view, because the writer wanted to identify the characteristics of slang language used in Eminem songs lyric. In order to limit the research, the researcher only focused on the characteristics of slang, and the common slang in Eminem songs lyric based on Abadi's theory about characteristics of slang. They are Creativity, Flippant, Fresh, Onomatopoeic.

## B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was kind of descriptive research because it described data and characteristics about the population or phenomenon being studied. According to Best in Pramudi (2009), descriptive research is a research method that tried to describe and interpret the object as it is. Descriptive research is also a study, in which the data collection to test research questions or hypotheses related to the state and current events. It reports the state of the object or subject under investigation as it is.

Based on the theory above, this research analyzed the characteristics of slang and the dominance slang in Eminem songs. The songs are *bully*, *I'm not afraid* and *no love*.

## C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Research Finding

Based on the analysis of this research, it was found out that the total data of slangs in Eminem songs were 47 slangs. There were 13 data of creativity,, 27 data of flippant, 5 data of fresh, and 2 data of onomatopoeic. The most dominance slang used in Eminem songs is Flippant.

#### a) Data Analysis

##### 1. Creativity

Creativity, according to Allan and Burrige (2006:69), is defined as the slang word has new vocabularies in order to describe something in informal situation. For example the word mom is used to address a woman, especially the elder one.

##### a. Bully

Datum 4 : *Now that I'm down with 50*

Slang : 50

“50” is a street slang to replace the word “police”. Originated from an old Cop ahow called Hawaii Five-O. This slang was used for the first time on September 1968 to April 1980. The “Five-O” in the title then became a commonly used for “Police”. Based on Abadi (2009, p.17) theory in characteristic of slang, the slang “50” belongs to Creativity Characteristic, because it is created from a new term which is imaginative, innovative, and productive.

##### b. I'm not afraid

Datum 5 : *he shits his bowels out of him*

Slang : **shits**

The slang “Shit” is the most functional word in English, it can be used to describe anything conceivable, from nouns to emotions. In this case Eminem uses “shit” is “to describe something worst”.

Based on Abadi (2009, p.17) theory in characteristic of slang, the slang “Shit” belongs to Creativity Characteristic, because it is created from a new term which is imaginative, innovative, and productive.

c. No Love

Datum 3 : and these niggas know...

Slang : **niggas**

The word “**niggas**” is another words to describe the **black people**. Eminem used different words to say the black people. Based on Abadi (2009, p.17) theory in characteristic of slang, in this case, the slang that Eminem used is belong to *Fresh Characteristic*, because they are different from the existing words.

2. Flippant

a. Bully

Datum 1 : punk ass little pussy's puny neck

Slang : **punk ass little pussy's puny neck**

The slang “**Punk ass little pussy's puny neck**” meaning is only “**a weak neck**”. But by using the slang, Eminem can exactly tell his emotion feeling with more power, so that the listeners can also get the powerness of what he felt from the lyric. Based on Abadi (2009, p.17) theory in characteristic of slang, the slang “**punk ass little pussy's puny neck**” belongs to *Flippant Character*. This slang belong to Flippant character because it has irrelevant word of the contexts.

b. I'm not afraid

Datum 2 : I dont give a damn what you think

Slang : : **I dont give a damn**

“**I dont give a damn**” means that someone who “**doesnt care about something**”. In this case Eminem used this slang to tell people that he doesnt care about what people feel or think. This slang is belong to *Flippant type* because this slang is made by more than two words composed not correlated with denotative meaning.

c. No love

Datum 1 : Throw dirt on me and grow a wildflower

Slang : **Throw dirt on me**

The slang “**Throw dirt on me**” doesn't mean that someone throwing pup to Eminem, but it means that someone put some trouble. This slang has irrelevant meaning from the context, therefore this slang belongs to flippant. According to Abadi (2009, p.17) theory in characteristic of slang.

3. Fresh

a. Bully

Datum 2 : *So he extorts someone else to get his dough*

Slang : **dough**

Eminem uses “**dough**” which the meaning is “**money**”. Based on Abadi (2009, p.17) theory in characteristic of slang, the slang “**dough**” belongs to *Fresh Character*, because the slang expression is produced by new words, which is different from the existing word

b. Im not afraid

Datum 1 : *You can try and read my lyrics off of this paper before I lay 'em*

Slang : **'Em**

“Em” is a short term for “them”. Most people use this way because this way is easier rather than using the word “them” itself. This slang is belong to *Fresh type*. Based on Abadi (2009, p.17) Fresh type has the new vocabulary, informal variety, imaginal, cleverness and also can be an up to date words. Eminem used ‘em for saying “them”. Some words which are already familiar with our mind possibly will be slang words as we don't realize it. The reasons why those slangs become familiar with our mind because those slang words appear in long time ago since slang words are already appeared since 18th century as stated by Allan and Burridge (ibid:69).

b. No Love

Datum 9 : *All about my dough but I don't even check..*

Slang : **dough**

“**Dough**” belongs to Fresh type because the slang expression is produced by new words, which is different from the existing word. This type is usually used in informal situation. Based on

explanations above we can say that Fresh is one of the slang types with a totally new vocabulary and used in informal situation Abadi (2009,p.17).

|

#### 4. Onomatopoeic

##### a. Bully

Datum 13 : and they go huff and puff and blow our label down

Slang : **and they go huff and puff and blow our label down**

The slang “ **And they go huff and puff and blow our label down**” is a slang which produced by imitating certain sound,”huff” and “puff”. The “**huff**” and “**puff**” meaning is “**the sound of the big bad wolf made when they tried to blow down the 3 little pig’s house**”.Because this slang is produced by imitating certain sound therefore it belongs to *Onomatopoeic Character*, Based on Abadi (2009, p.17) about theory in characteristic of slang.

##### b.I’m not afraid

Datum 12 : All I’m tryin’ to say is get back, click clack, pow

Slang : **get back, click clack, pow**

**Get back, click clack, pow** is a gun which makes a lod chambering sound while loading it.this is includes but isnt limited to : Semi Automatic Pistols,and Pump Shotguns.That is also the sound of a pistol being cocked,or the sound of imminent death or Slang for shooting.The slang get **back, click clack, pow** is imitating a sound by a pistol.Therefore this slang belongs to Onomatopoeic type. Webster's Dictionary [www] defines *onomatopoeia* as “words that imitate the sound they denote“.It can be said that Onomatopoeic is an imitation words.

##### c.No love

There was no Onomatopoeic character found in no love song.

## 2. Research discussion

This table shows the frequency and percentage of characteristics of slang that found in Eminem songs.

No	Eminem's song	Characteristics of Slang							
		Creativity	%	Flippant	%	Fresh	%	Onomatopoeic	%
1	Bully	8		6		3		1	
2	I'm not afraid	2		10		1		1	
3	No Love	3		11		1		0	
Total		13		27		5		2	

From the result of the research above, it can be concluded that there are four characteristics of slang based on the theory of Abadi (2009, p.17). They are Creativity, Flippant, Fresh, and Onomatopoeic. The most characteristic of slang which used in Eminem slang is Flippant with the percentage of 27%. Meanwhile the most frequent characteristic of slang which used by Eminem in his songs is Flippant.

From the finding above, the result showed that the most common slang which used in Eminem songs is Flippant. Eminem tends to use the words which have irrelevant meaning. The listeners must think twice about the meaning, because the meaning is unstated.

## D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

There are four characteristics of slang based on the theory of Abadi (2009, p.17). The first one is Creativity. This slang is created from a new term which are imaginative, innovative, productive, even shocking, and amusing. Flippant, Fresh, and Onomatopoeic. The Second one is Flippant. Flippant means that the slang is made by two words or more in which the word composed not correlated with the denotative meaning. Then, Fresh. It means that slang language has totally with the new vocabulary, informal variety, imaginal, cleverness and also can be an up to date words. The last one is Onomatopoeic. The words that imitate natural sound like bang, are often focused on the connection between sound and meaning and the similarities between different languages. It can be said that Onomatopoeic is an imitation words. Onomatopoeic Slang produced by imitating certain sounds.

There are a lot of slangs that can be found in Rap songs. Especially in Eminem songs. Eminem is the best-selling artist of the 2000s in the United States. His songs also get the best-selling in the United States. The three popular songs that he has are Bully, I'm not afraid, and No Love which have many slangs in it. In this research, the writer found the dominance slang which used in Eminem songs. The most common slang is Flippant, because Flippant is the type of slang which have irrelevant word of the context. The researcher can also conclude that

Eminem tends to use the words which have irrelevant meaning. The listeners must think twice about the meaning, because the meaning is unstated.

This research analyzed about the characteristics of slang in Eminem songs and the common slang which used by Eminem in his songs. There are still many aspects that can be studied about the characteristics of slang. It is suggested that the others researcher can continue about this topic. The suggestion for the future, the study about this research can be applied largely especially to develop a better knowledge to study more about address term.

**Notes:** This article is written based on Rani Evadewi's paper under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Jufrizal, M.Hum

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abadi, Mukhtar. (2009). *Analysis on the use of slang on Eminem's lyrics*. Thesis, English Letters and Language Department, Faculty of Humanities and Culture, the State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.
- Patel, Aniruddh D.2008. *Music,Language and The Brain*.Oxford, London: Oxford University Press.
- Levinson, Stephen C. 1983. *Pragmatics*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Davis, Kristine Ann.2011. *Get Rich or Die Tryin': A Semiotic Approach to the Construct of Wealth in Rap Music*.
- Lobner, Sebastian. 2002. *Understanding Semantics*. Arnold: London: Blackwell.
- Langga ,Silvia Laura.1967. *The meaning analysis of Slang Used In Notorious Song "Love no ho"*. New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Matiello, Elisa. 2005. *The Pervasiveness of Slang In Standard an Non-Standard English*.
- Jespersen, Otto. 1922. *Language : its nature, development and origin*. <http://books.google.se/books?id=cAhG0vdUtSwC&dq>. Accessed 18 December 2009.
- Pedersen, B. (2009). Anticipation and Delay as Micro-Rhythm and Gesture in Hip Hop Aesthetics. *Journal of Music & Meaning*, 8(2), 1-22.
- Watkins, S. C. 2001. "A Nation of Millions: Hip
- Abrams M. H. (1999). *A Glossary of Literary Terms Ed. 7th*. US, Massachusetts.
- Fell, Michael & Caroline Sporleder. (2014). *Lyics-based Analysis and Classification of Music*. Online.
- Yule.G.1996. *Pragmatics*.Oxford.Oxford University Press



Hanggoro, Ari. (2011). *An analysis of slang terms in the American gangster, a movie directed by Ridley Scott*. Thesis: English Letters Department, Faculty of Adab and Humanities, State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.

Swan, Michael. *Practical English Usage*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005.

