Discovering the Pattern of Pop Song Artist's Word Formation Processes for Slangs

by Yanti Kristina Sinaga, Herman Herman Arwin Tannuary

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ARTICLE HISTORY

ABSTRACT

Songs is one of the most popular creations of human language, but linguistic study of this medium is still limited. One popular trend is to study the slangs in songs, but previous studies often used a single song or albums with little data, thus this study aims to explore the word formation of slangs in a pop album known for its numerous slangs in each song, namely the album *Heaven & Hell* by Ava Max. This study is descriptive qualitative research. The data is the lyrics of the 15 songs of the album which were analysed with content analysis to identify the slang word formation processes. Of the total 545 slangs, results found five types of processes: contraction, shortening, blending, clipping and compounding. Contraction is the most dominant type by a huge margin (77%), which is significantly different with the majority of previous studies' conclusion that clipping is the most dominant type. This study offers a new insight by extending the amount of data. Similar studies in the past have mostly conducted this study on less than 200 data of slangs in a single song or a selection of a few songs in an album, while this study included all 15 songs in an album to obtain more than 500 data and found the pattern of dominant types of slang word formation process to be different than what has been reported over the years.

1. Introduction

Modern daily life uses language in a variety of ways to communicate, not solely to communicate with one another but also to generally convey ideas, thoughts or feelings to the world. The forms of language are more complex beyond the binary spoken and written or verbal and visual language (Pasaribu et al., 2020; Thao & Herman, 2020). This study is concerned with one form of language where spoken and written forms are closely interdependent, namely songs. At its most basic, a song is a short piece of music, usually with words. It is a form of literature that has taken over the modern world as popular songs dominate people's lifespans and has become such an embedded culture as songs are now referenced in almost any context (Harbi et al., 2019). While largely universal due to its entertainment value, songs are notoriously a form of linguistic art that humans use to deliver ideas or messages to the public; thus, this study finds popular songs to be worth exploring from a linguistic perspective.

Previous studies have scrutinised song lyrics, although they largely focus on sexual lyrics and their impact on adolescent sexual behaviour (Primack et al., 2009; Wright & Rubin, 2017). This trend remains strong because "music that commodifies a woman's body, rendering it the property of others and assigning value equal to its sexiness, may reinforce sexist gender roles and scripts related to the subordination of women in society," (Cougar-Hall et al., 2012, p. 106). Since the negative aspects of sexual behaviour is closely related with aggression, psychological experts have also explored the idea of whether aggressive music can make listeners aggressive as well (Pieschl & Fegers, 2015). Because pop songs are such an integral part of the modern culture and songs in general are one of the cultural identity markers of certain groups of people or eras, the majority of existing studies are focused on investigating its effects upon listeners.

On the other hand, this study is more interested in investigating song lyrics with a linguistics lens. Research on songs' linguistic features is still fairly limited in terms of scope. A few studies aimed to identify the types of figurative language that a particular song contains. For example, Listani's (2015) thesis offered their findings of hyperbole, personification, simile, metaphor, synecdoche, symbol and oxymoron samples in the songs of Taylor Swift's *Speak Now* album. Analysing the pop song "Lose You to Love Me" by Selena Gomez, Dewi et al. (2020) identified six kinds of figurative language (e.g., hyperbole, irony, paradox, personification, repetition and simile), observing that hyperbole is the most dominant type because the song lyrics were distorted by extending the original meanings of explicit words with connotations. Ibrahim et al. (2019) who identified repetition, hyperbole, metaphor, pleonasm, personification, dispersonification and onomatopoeia figurative languages in the song "Endless Love" by Diana Ross. Similar kinds of study have also been replicated by Nursolihat & Kareviati (2020) with Zayn Malik's "A Whole New World" song, Setiawati & Maryani (2018) with Taylor

Swift's "22" song, Ardyanti & Supriyatiningsih's (2020) with Celine Dion's "Fly (Falling into You)" song, Muhammad et al. (2021) with Maroon 5's "Nobody's Love" song, Yastanti et al. (2018) with Linkin Park's *One More Light* album, and many more.

The next kind of popular studies that explored the linguistics of songs are focused on slangs. Slangs are linguistically interesting because it is generally exclusive to particular in-groups in informal conversation, but is simultaneously a common device across all genres of music. Due to this, many studies have carried out analysis on the types of slang language. Covering "Blurryface" made by Twenty One Pilot, Wijaya et al. (2021) identified five types of slang words: cockney, public house, workmen, public school/university and society slang, with public house slangs being the most dominant. In Nicki Minaj's "*Bang Bang*", "*Anaconda*" and "*Girlfriend*" songs, sexual slangs are the most common followed by society slangs (Septina & Anwar, 2018). In Cardi B's The *Invasion of Privacy* album, society, art, and medicine slangs were found with society slangs being the most common (Antari et al., 202). Dewi & Widiastuti (2020) also replicated this type of study on three different artists' songs.

Lastly, other than types of slangs, researchers have also been interested in the way these slangs are formed morphologically. Using Billie Eilish's 13 songs in the *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?* album, Siahaan et al. (2021) identified six types of word formation processes across 159 slangs: coinage, borrowing, compounding, clipping, derivation, and blending as the most dominant type. Haspo & Rosa (2018) identified slang word formations in five rap songs from Eminem's *Kamikaze* album, finding clipping, followed by coinage, compounding, blending, clipping, conversion, acronym, derivation, back-formation and multiple processes. According to the study, clipping is the most dominantly used word formation process to create the slangs across all songs in order to achieve a rhyme and beat balance. Identical types of studies have also been carried out by Aisyah & Larasati (2021) with Avril Lavigne's "Head Above Water" song, Budasi & Bhuwana (2020) with Drake's songs, Tanamal et al. (2020) with Travis Scott on *Astroworld* Album.

Overall, current linguistic exploration of songs is dominantly about identifying figurative language, slangs and word formation processes. Considering the prolific nature of studies on slangs in songs, especially on the word formation processes, further replication might not be able to offer anything new. However, this study still finds value in conducting this study. Upon observing the wide range of data, namely the many different songs that have been studied, this study noted that previous findings were born from small numbers of slang data, ranging from roughly 50 to 150 examples. This study would like to replicate the study of slangs in songs by extending the sample data beyond 200.

Figure 1. Cover of Ava Max's *Heaven & Hell* album

In order to obtain a huge amount of data, this study selected an album that is popular worldwide and contain many slangs in the lyrics. Thus, the data of this study is Ava Max's debut studio album entitled *Heaven & Hell* (**Figure 1**), which was released on September 2020 and peaked at number two on the UK Albums Chart and at number 27 on the US Billboard 200. The research aim of this study is

2. Literature Review

Previous studies have carried out analysis on popular songs. Arguably, the most prolific area in the research literature of popular songs (pop songs) is the sexualization and misogyny in lyrics (Wright & Rubin, 2017). A study exploring themes related to sexual desire (lust) and romantic desire (love) in the lyrics of popular music over the past 40 years discovered that there was a linear decrease over time in the proportion of love songs while there was a significant increase in the proportion of songs with a theme focusing on lust in the absence of love (Madanikia & Bartholomew, 2014). They came to this conclusion from an analysis of 360 songs that represented the top 40 songs of every 5 years in the Billboard Year End Hot 100 single songs. Psychological researchers are particularly concerned with the fact that popular songs are ripe with sexual lyrics, and that most of these references are highly degrading. Upon surveying 711 ninth-grade students, Primack et al. (2009) brought to light how exposure to these sexual lyrics, both degrading and non-degrading, influence early sexual experiences among adolescents. This is supported Cougar-Hall et al. (2012) who found that the trend of mass exposure to objectifying media and self-sexualized behaviour across 600 most popular songs in the Billboard Year End Hot 100 must be taken into account by sexuality educators as they greatly influence adolescent sexual behaviour and attitudes.

In addition, the field of psychology has also focused on exploring the effect of songs with aggression, particularly songs that convey violent lyrics and carry themes related to drugs (Diamond et al., 2006; Fischer & Greitemeyer, 2006). Pieschl & Fegers (2015) questioned whether violent lyrics breeds aggressive listeners. They experimented on 120 university students to listen to two kinds of songs (e.g.,

violent and prosocial), and found that while students were primed to be more aggressive after being exposed to violent lyrics, the same could not be said for students who were listening to songs containing prosocial values, which include helping, sharing, donating, co-operating, and volunteering. Though this finding contributed in the negative connotation of violent lyrics, recent took into account of the different ways fans and non-fans of violent songs can emotionally respond to provide contrasting findings. Fans of violent music were found to assign lower ratings to positive emotions and higher ratings to negative emotions, but they also use their preferred music for positive psychosocial functions such as empowerment and joy (Olsen et al., 2020). Regardless of the violence of the lyrics, when the listener are fans of the genre, they tend to experience positive emotions and the reverse is true for non-fans, implying that the effect may depend on the listeners' personality traits and music-listening motivations rather than solely the songs' linguistic features (Thompson et al., 2019).

The discipline of computer sciences is also exploring songs, though they mostly focus on the emerging field of automatic generation of music (Ackerman & Loker, 2017; Oliveira, 2015; Toivanen et al., 2013). Most of the studies in this area seem to focus on classical music, so recent studies are focusing on automatic creation of popular songs. For example, Navarro-Cáceres (2020) developed an intelligent system to generate melodies based on popular Spanish music. In a similar fashion, Son et al. (2019) used deep learning to generate Korean songs.

Meanwhile, research on songs' linguistic features is still fairly limited in terms of scope. One study explored songs in a different angle, analysing Michael Heart's "We Will Not Go Down" to find three aspects of discourse analysis, namely contextual, grammatical and lexical aspects (Risdianto, 2016). The study found that the songwriter's life experiences greatly influenced the ideas within the song lyrics, the song contained both plural and personal pronouns, but only one form of lexical aspect, which is repetition to influence the listeners to believe that Palestinian people will not surrender to forces intending to colonize them. Meanwhile, most studies aimed to identify the types of figurative language that a particular song contains. For example, Listani's (2015) thesis offered their findings of hyperbole, personification, simile, metaphor, synecdoche, symbol and oxymoron samples in the songs of Taylor Swift's *Speak Now* album. Analysing the pop song "Lose You to Love Me" by Selena Gomez, Dewi et al. (2020) identified six kinds of figurative language (e.g., hyperbole, irony, paradox, personification, repetition and simile), observing that hyperbole is the most dominant type because the song lyrics were distorted by extending the original meanings of explicit words with connotations. Ibrahim et al. (2019) who identified repetition, hyperbole, metaphor, pleonasm, personification, dispersonification and onomatopoeia figurative languages in the song "Endless Love" by Diana Ross. Similar kinds of study have also been replicated by Nursolihat & Kareviati (2020) with Zayn Malik's "A Whole New World" song, Setiawati & Maryani (2018) with Taylor Swift's "22" song, Ardyanti & Supriyatiningsih's (2020) with Celine Dion's "Fly (Falling into You)" song, Muhammad et al. (2021) with Maroon 5's "Nobody's Love" song, Yastanti et al. (2018) with Linkin Park's *One More Light* album, and many more.

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3. Method

The design of this study was descriptive qualitative. The data consists of the lyrics of the songs within Ava Max's *Heaven & Hell* album, which can be accessed at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heaven_%26_Hell_(Ava_Max_album. The researchers accessed the album's official lyric

159

videos on the links displayed in Table 1. The researcher collected the data by downloading the videos and transcribing the lyrics.

Table 1. Links of the Official Lyric Videos of the 15 Songs in "Heaven & Hell" Album by Ava Max

No	Song Titles	Official Lyric Video
1	Heaven	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ucg4PwY0W70&list=PL2piglgrN6HDSpJJJnb9UA1IRSToJ81oP&index=21&ab_chan nel=AvaMax
2	Kings & Queen	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hn6lonvIRsI&list=PL2piglgrN6HDSpJJJnb9UA1IRSToJ81oP&index=20&ab_channel= aMax
3	Naked	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vULZUvTr3tw&list=PL2piglgrN6HDSpJJJnb9UA1IRSToJ81oP&index=19&ab_chann el=AvaMax
4	Tattoo	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jmRC2dKOhw&list=PL2piglgrN6HDSpJJJnb9UA1IRSToJ81oP&index=18&ab_chan nel=AvaMax
5	OMG What's Happening	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AoxO07NfzBc&list=PL2piglgrN6HDSpJJJnb9UA1IRSToJ81oP&index=17&ab_chann el=AvaMax
6	Call Me Tonight	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ose5nHYKqNs&list=PL2piglgrN6HDSpJJJnb9UA1IRSToJ81oP&index=16&ab_chann el=AvaMax
7	Born to the Night	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=riP6j7SZ04s&list=PL2piglgrN6HDSpJJJnb9UA1IRSToJ81oP&index=15&ab_channel= AvaMax
8	Torn	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ak3HY-VqZo&list=PL2piglgrN6HDSpJJJnb9UA1IRSToJ81oP&index=14&ab_channel=AvaMax
9	Take You to Hell	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdQDqcfdtcA&ab_channel=AvaMax
10	Who's Laughing Now	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JYSgIiSZSA&list=PL2piglgrN6HDSpJJJnb9UA1IRSToJ81oP&index=11&ab_channe l=AvaMax
11	Belladonna	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6r0hZEXE0Y&ab_channel=AvaMax
12	Rumors	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cRzcUxLxlM&ab_channel=AvaMax
13	So Am I	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdPt2z1YMZE&list=PL2piglgrN6HDSpJJJnb9UA1IRSToJ81oP&index=12&ab_chann el=AvaMax
14	Salt	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKWHYLtmAGA&ab_channel=AvaMax
15	Sweet but Psycho	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKECCYimpw&list=PL2piglgrN6HDSpJJJnb9UA1IRSToJ81oP&index=13&ab_chan nel=AvaMax

The data were analysed with content analysis method. This method was chosen because it can deconstruct huge amounts of texts from various sources, including texts on video or website sources. The data analysis was focused on the slang words found in the song lyrics in order to identify, classify and reveal the dominant types of the word formation processes. The type of data code in this study is open coding, which is breaking down the qualitative data into discrete excerpts with codes that represent a label, description, definition, or category name. Excerpts of the songs are coded based on the word formation processes of the slangs that each line of lyric contain. The coding formula is **Excerpt Data** **Number_Word Formation Process/Song Title of the Selected Lyric.**

4. Results

After analysing all the lyrics in 15 songs in the album, this study managed to find 545 individual slangs. The researchers combed through this huge amount of data to identify how each slang was formed morphologically. The analysis yielded five kinds of word formation processes, namely contraction, shortening, blending, clipping and compounding.
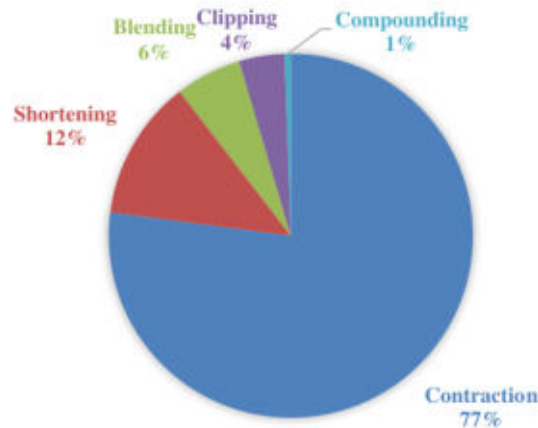
Chart 1. Types of Slang Word Formation Processes

As can be seen in **Chart 1**, more than three quarters of the 545 identified slangs were created through contraction (77.06%; N = 420). Contraction or fusion is a process that combines two words into a new word that can be pronounced with one syllable. For example, do + not → don't, let + us → let's, and about → 'bout.

> "'*Cause* once I put this love on you, it never comes off."

Excerpt 1_Contraction/Tattoo

> "*Didn't* know I was alone '*til* I was runnin' to your […] Writing in my journal '*bout* you."

Excerpt 2_Contraction/OMG What's Happening

> "*Let's* get out of here, it's getting late. So who's gonna love you, if it *ain't* me, baby? Who's gonna touch you, if it *ain't* me, baby?"

Excerpt 3_Contraction/Rumors

> "*Didn't* mean to cause no pain (Oh)."

Excerpt 4_Contraction/Belladonna

> "'*Cause* baby, so am I (so am I, so am I, so am I) […] So let me tell you '*bout* my little secret."

Excerpt 5_Contraction/Salt

All of the 15 songs have contraction slangs in common, and these showed up in 1-2 in multiple sentences. As can be seen on **Excerpts 1-5**, the album almost always contracted the words "because, until, about" to "'*cause, 'til, 'bout*" so that the phonology can be shortened to just one syllable. The reason why this type of word formation process dominated the data is because majority of the slangs are simple contractions of "*I'm, I'll, you're, you'll, you've, she's, can't, don't, won't, it'd, there's, that's, didn't, ain't.*"

Other slangs' word formation processes were more varied by a small margin. Following the most dominant type, the second type is a simple shortening of words (12.47%; N = 68).

> "And finally you left and now I'm *missin'* you like crazy […] Wonder if it's over, I ain't *gettin'* closer […] *Somethin'* about your face […] Didn't know I was alone 'til I was *runnin'* to your, *runnin'* to your heart."

Excerpt 6_Shortening/OMG What's Happening

> "Baby, you're not *dancin'* on your own […] Once I start *breathin'* fire, you can't tame me."

Excerpt 7_ Shortening/Kings & Queens

> "*Screamin'* woo-oo-ooh."

Excerpt 8_ Shortening/Born to the Night

> "Break, break your heart in the *mornin'*, don't you worry."

Excerpt 9_ Shortening/Call Me Tonight

> "But when I play my cards, keep '*em* close to my chest."

Excerpt 10_ Shortening/Naked

Unlike contraction, the slangs of this second type were not two words which were shortened to one syllable. For example, "*dancin'*", which is a slang for "dancing", is still pronounced with two syllables. Similarly, there is no reduction of syllables from "them" to "'*em*." These slangs were formed by cutting the ending of the word.

Moreover, this study observed that all of the slangs formed by shortening were always verb words in the continuous present tense, e.g., dying, playing, slipping, dripping, looking, thinking, and many more. Only a few clipping slangs were made from noun words, namely "*mornin'*" from "morning", an adjective, such as "*shinin'*

knight" from "shining knight", or a pronoun, such as "*'em*" from "them."

Next, 5.87% (N = 32) of the remaining dataset were slangs formed through blending. Blending is the word formation process that combines two or more words to create a new word, which would then be formally known as portmanteaus. Typical examples of blended words are smoke + fog → smog, web + seminar → webinar, and cybernetic + organism → cyborg. **Excerpts 11-14** shows the only four blending slangs that this study found in the songs.

"Oh, I *wanna* stay, *wanna* walk out the door."

Excerpt 11_Blending/Torn

"Walkin' Killer Queen, *gotta* keep 'em guessin' [...] So why you *tryna* be just like the neighborhood."

Excerpt 12_Blending/So Am I

"If you're *gonna* treat me right."

Excerpt 13_Blending/Take You to Hell

"*Kinda* crazy. She's poison but tasty."

Excerpt 14_Blending/Sweet but Psycho

Blending slangs are crated through combining two words, for instance, "want" and "to" are combined into "*wanna*". "Want to" is the formal form, as well as "got to" and "trying to", but plenty of songs blended them to the slang versions, namely "*wanna, gonna, tryna*." The only other blending slang that were not formed with the word "to" is "*kinda*", which stands for "kind of."

The fourth type of word formation process is clipping (4.03%; N = 22), which is also known as truncation. Not to be mistaken to the simple shortening word formation process which cuts of "g" from "ng", this morphological process creates words by shortening the polysyllabic word into a shorter form. A word can be clipped from the back (e.g., gas from gasoline), fore (e.g., gator from alligator), middle (e.g., flu from influenza) or in a more complex way (e.g., sitcom from situation comedy). This study only found two examples of slangs created by clipping in the album's songs, one of which was repeated many times due to being the titular word.

"Oh, she's sweet but a *psycho*. A little bit *psycho* [...] Oh, she's hot but a *psycho*."

Excerpt 15_Clipping/Sweet but Psycho

"Grab a *cop gun*. Kinda crazy."

Excerpt 16_Clipping/Sweet but Psycho

The word "*psycho*" in **Excerpt 15** is formed from the word "psychopath". In **Excerpt 16**, the term "cop" is a slang on its own for police officer, but paired with "*cop gun*" indicates that the word is a clipping from what should be formally written as "police gun."

The last word formation process has the least number of slangs, which is compounding (0.55%; N = 3). While blending combines different parts of words, compounding combines two or more lexemes combine into a single word, which can then be written as one word or a hyphenated word, such as bitter + sweet → bittersweet, stir + fry → stir-fry, and out + run → outrun. A unique characteristic of compound words is that the new words' meanings can be compositional or non-compositional. The former means that the meaning can be based on the parts of the words, such as "blue + berry → blueberry" which means a berry that is blue. Meanwhile, the latter means that the new word's meaning can be unrelated with the individual words. For instance, "break + up → breakup" does not mean a relationship that was broken in an upward direction.

"So why you tryna be just like the *neighborhood*."

Excerpt 17_Compounding/So Am I

"But, but then you give me *fireworks*."

Excerpt 18_Compounding/Torn

"'Cause she tastes so sweet, don't *sugarcoat* it."

Excerpt 19_Compounding/Sweet but Psycho

While many compound words were present in the lyrics, only three were found to be used as slangs. "*Neighborhood*", a compound word made from "neighbor" and "hood", is a slang for a pop cultural reference. "*Fireworks*" made from "fire" and "works" in the lyrics does not mean the explosive device, but refers to an explosive emotion. Lastly, "sugarcoat", which is made from "sugar" and "coat", literally it is a verb for coating an item of food with sugar, in slang it means to talk about or describe (something) in a way that makes it seem more pleasant or acceptable than it is.

5. Discussion

This study analysed how English slangs in Ava Max's *Heaven & Hell* album are formed. The results revealed five process of word formation for the slangs, namely contraction (77.06%), shortening (12.47%), blending (5.87%), clipping (4.03%) and compounding (0.55%). According to the findings, contraction is the most dominant type of word formation process for the slangs. This finding is different with majority of previous studies that have also tried to identify the word formation processes of slangs in songs, which found clipping or blending as the most common process (Haspo & Rosa, 2018; Siahaan et al., 2021). The break in the usual pattern seem to merge because of the difference of data in this study, which is three times larger than what previous studies tend to use.

Regarding the specific type of word formation process, this study concludes that contraction is naturally the most dominant type because of how deeply this type is integrated into casual English use. Contraction words are formed by combining multiple words with the purpose of pronouncing them with just one syllable, e.g., about → 'bout. It is also prevalent because English speakers have the tendency to use

two types of contractions in their speech and informal writing. The first is the verb *is*-contraction; This is discovered in MacKenzie's (2016) research on English *is*-contraction a corpus of 1032 data from telephone conversations between 354 native speakers of American English. This previous study detailed that when English speakers mentally form utterances on-the-go (incremental language production), the English verb "is" is often contracted earlier in their sentences, followed by noun phrases (e.g., "My name is Donna"), adjective phrases (e.g., "Budgeting is very important to us"), prepositional phrases (e.g., "Our son is into heavy metal"), progressive verbs (e.g., "Gene is working on his cars") and going to/gonna (e.g., "I don't think any politician is gonna do that") categories which usually cont 17 the main or primary information. The second type is the negative contractions (isn't, haven't, doesn't). This type of contraction, similarly with verb contractions, are actively discouraged by teachers and educators who taught students to avoid using it in formal writing such as academic essays and business reports (Babanoğlu, 2017). This also means that many English teachers are also reinforcing the notion that contractions are the norm—and even indicators—of casual, day-to-day language. Thus, it makes sense that contraction dominated the other types of word formation processes by such a huge margin in the findings of this study, since it is highly relatable and easily rolls of the tongue for pop songs.

The prevalence of English contractions is also true in internet linguistics. David Crystal, a famous linguist known for his observations of linguistic changes caused by the changing technology, stated that contractions is the symbol of colloquial language (Crystal, 2008). This is further confirmed by AbuSa'aleek (2015) which presented a comprehensive picture of contemporary discourse (electronic discourse) by analysing a total of 4760 English words from a corpus of 340 messages posted by undergraduate students. Furthermore, people's messages tend to be shorter the higher their excitement becomes, which is a systematic correlation unearthed by Szell et al. (2014).

Shortening slangs, in which one word's ending is cut off, is the second most prevalent type. In English language, English speakers commonly reduce the suffix -ing to a single "n" sound as a deliberate manner to signal that they are speaking casually. Shortening words can also be a natural or embedded trait of a particular accent (Rathcke & Smith, 2015). This recurring linguistic trait may be influenced by English speakers' other tendency to consider larger parts of people's names as superfluous, e.g., Di for Diana, Em for Emily, and Vic for Victoria. Shortening is not limited to words with the -ing suffix or names, but could be applied to any kind of words, common or unusual, e.g., undergrad(uate), brig(antine), kilo(gram), sov(ereign), cab(riolet). Shortened words, according to Jesperson (2020), is also called as "stump-words", one of the unique ways that

English speakers' mission to achieve efficiency with their language. It is ever more popularised by the internet-communicational system's penchant for memes (Kostadinovska-Stojchevska & Shalevska, 2018). Thus, it makes sense that this type of word formation process is prevalent among the data of slangs, although not to the extent of contractions.

The rest of the data outputs of slangs in Ava Max's *Heaven & Hell* album's songs contain minimal evidence of slangs formed by other types of word formation processes, namely blending, clipping and compounding. Blending, as a rule, is a purposeful, semantically-motivated reduction for the creation of a new word from two or more fragments of words. It is playing with an already given piece of language (Gatti et al., 2015). According to Boichuk (2021, p. 15), "there is no single definition of blending units, and therefore to denote this phenomenon, scientists use the following concepts: telescoping, telescoped words, blend, blendings, contamination, portmanteau words." Based on a study that investigated the word formation processes for the naming of medicines, majority of over-the-counter product names were formed by blending, specifically 34 out of the total 57 product names, e.g., San~be~ + anti + influenza → Sanaflu (Pamungkas & Abdulah, 2017). Interestingly, this previous study confirmed that only blending word formation process is the popular type that is used to create over-the-counter medicines, since they only found one product name formed by clipping, two names formed by compounding—a pattern that is reflected in this current study's findings.

The fourth type of word formation process is clipping or truncating, which has multiple ways to shorten a polysyllabic word (Madazizova, 2021). Speakers can clip words from the back, front, middle or a mix of these—and clipping words is not limited to English language but also frequently occurs in other languages, such as Indonesian (Derin, 2019; Zaim, 2018). Daniel (2018) on the morphological process of clipping words noted that the process or pattern of whether a word is clipped from the front, back or others is arbitrary, thus it is also the most creatively productive form of deliberate language change. Similar to shortening, clipping is heavily featured in online forums, to the point that it is considered as a linguistic subculture (Thotagamuwa, 2020).

The last and rarely used word formation process used in these songs, in the case of slangs, is compounding, which puts together two free forms and gives rise to a new word. The difference between blendings and compoundings is that in compounds the components are whole bases, and in blendings at least one of the components is not a whole, but a reduced form, its fragment (Boichuk, 2021). Previous studies focusing on compounding are numerous, but seemingly none on pop songs in particular. Qudeisat & Rababah (2021), who studied the names of shop signs in Jordan, noted that compoundings are not limited to words from a singular language, but can also be formed from more

than one language. For instance, they found a shop sign "Pastahane", which comes from the Italian word "pasta" and the Turkish word for house "hane." Compounding itself is also a well-known quirk for particular languages, such as German being known for its propensity for nominal compounding due to heavier use of nouns and adjectives (Berg, 2017). This study concludes that with compounding's highly specific purpose of creating a new word, the probability of artists using this word formation process to create slangs for their pop songs can be low. The low number of compounding slangs can also be attributed to the general purpose of using slangs in pop songs, which is to simply shorten words to achieve a desired rhythm.

Overall, although this study might not introduce a new route in terms of its research design, as it still replicated previous study's purpose of identifying slangs in song albums, the novelty of this study is the amount of data that it covers. As far the researchers are aware, all other studies that are similar with this current research have relied on a smaller number of data compared to this paper's 545 outputs of slangs, so the pattern of word slang formation is much may be more reliable. Inclusion of more songs made by the artist, comparison with other artists' songs, or complementing the study with additional research instruments to enrich the data would be more comprehensive. Unlike majority of similar studies in the past, this study is also unique in that it discusses each of the identified word formation processes in detail with references to other linguistic/morphological studies to go beyond merely identifying the types by frequency. Considering the commonness of this type of research inquiry as thesis topics, identification of word formation process of slangs or other linguistic techniques in songs and other forms of literary works may have potential as an introductory practice for novice researchers in introductory linguistic courses. Moreover, patterns of songwriter's tendency or preference for a particular type of English word formation process might reveal something about the creative process of writing songs.

Furthermore, this study is limited to songs only in English language. Based on the literature review, the researchers noticed that this limitation is shared by many studies in the past. This indicates that there seems to be a lack of studies comparing the word formation processes of English with other non-English languages. Comparison of two or more languages are naturally predominant in translation studies, so this paper recommends future researchers to address the gap of comparison of their songs or literature from the lens of linguistics.

6. Conclusion

As what is arguably the most popular form of expression via language, songs serve as an interesting object to be studied linguistically. However, they are traditionally analysed in terms of what they represent, such as the values they contain or the sociocultural aspects associated with them. This study contributed to the understudied area of research regarding the word formation process of songs, specifically slangs within songs. From a rich data of 545 slangs identified in the 15 songs of Ava Max's *Heaven & Hell* album, this study found five kinds of word formation processes, contraction (77.06%), shortening (12.47%), blending (5.87%), clipping (4.03%) and compounding (0.55%). The novelty of this study is the richness of its base data, as previous studies that similarly explored slang word formation processes often only analysed a few songs or a small number of raw data. Although this study might not explore the linguistic aspect of songs in the most original way, this paper points out that there are still more room in the study of songs from a morphological standpoint, from its potential as a window to people's linguistic creativity with English language to its viability as an easy-lesson-activity for introductory English linguistics course.

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