

# AN ANALYSIS TABOO WORDS IN DANGDUT POP SONG LYRICS:

## SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY

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### **Abstract**

Taboo word is a proscription of behavior that affects daily life. This research is about taboo words on dangdut pop song lyrics. This research aims to find out the types and describes the functions of taboo words in dangdut pop song lyrics. The researcher applies qualitative research and content analysis as the research design. The data were in the form of dangdut pop song lyrics, while the contexts of the data were the word and sentences uttered by the dangdut singers. The data were collected by selecting words and sentences containing taboo words after watching the video and reading the lyrics carefully. The primary instrument of this research was the researcher, while the secondary instrument was a data sheet. The results of this research are stated as follows. Firstly, four types of taboo words occur in dangdut pop song lyrics. From 20 data found in types of taboo words in the dangdut song, vulgarity has the biggest number of occurrences. The dangdut singers frequently utter vulgarity to show their disrespect toward the audience. The smallest number of taboo word types are profanity and obscenity. Secondly, four functions of taboo words are found in the dangdut pop song lyrics. The most appeared function is to draw attention to oneself, and the least is to be provocative and to mock authority. Most of the lyrics use taboo words when they want to get the audience's attention with harsh words. To be provocative and to mock authority only occurs once because the dangdut singers do not provoke audience anger and are not concerned in criticizing governmental stuff. From the result, the researcher suggest to students can sort out the use of polite words in daily conversation and also have to pay attention to taboo words in songs that should not be said in public. It is suggest for students to avoid dangdut pop songs that have taboo words in them and are not recommended to be sung. To future researchers, it is expected that future researchers can analyze taboo words in other genres of music. To readers in general, hopefully, the readers can recognize that taboo words are not only employed in conversation but also songs. Moreover, the researcher suggests that the readers should be careful when speaking taboo words.

**Keywords:** Taboo Words, Dangdut Pop Song Lyrics, Sociolinguistic.

## INTRODUCTION

Seeing the development of music in Indonesia, there is one type of music that is popular and has many fans, namely dangdut music. Dangdut music which is currently hype is liked by many young people because it is easy listening. The presence of dangdut pop singers, who are generally young, beautiful, and sexy girls with modest vocal abilities, has made dangdut pop color "boom" and removed the boundaries with classical dangdut (Kesumah et al., 1995: 38). There is the use of dangdut pop song lyrics that violate the norms of decency, such as the use of taboo words or words that should not be spoken. The idealism of dangdut songwriters to work with high quality seems to be receding due to changing community conditions (Kesumah et al., 1995: 38). So, the creation of pop dangdut songs also follows the tastes of the market or consumers, including in making the lyrics of the song which is closely related to sexuality. Starting from the title, theme, lyrics, singing style and even the dance that accompanies it, it is very lustful. In addition, the use of language or words in the dangdut song indicates a shift in the value of polite language in a song lyric that is displayed in public. This is something taboo to be shown through mass media, such as television and radio.

Many of the dangdut pop songs on YouTube that young people hear have not passed the Regional Indonesian Broadcasting (KPID) screening. Even though they haven't graduated from KPID, these dangdut pop songs have been seen by hundreds to millions of viewers on Youtube, for example, the song Hutang by Lala Widy and New Monata. The emergence of dangdut pop songs with titles and lyrics deemed to violate the norms of decency also caused a reaction from the government. The Regional Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPID) of Central Java banned and restricted some dangdut songs on local television and radio.

Language is a tool to capture information when communicating. (Rabiah, 2012: 4) stated that language is a tool to interact or to communicate, in a sense, to convey thoughts, ideas, concepts, or a feeling. (Weedon N, 1997: 21) stated that language it is a place where the actual and possible forms of social organization and their possible social and political consequences are defined and contested. Language in his perspective is the place where forms of social organization are produced and debated. There are many types of language and cultural identity constructed by language, one of which is the language of cultural identity and non-standard, namely taboo words.

In order to find out certain information about taboo, (Allan, Kate & Burrige, 2006: 12) stated that taboo is a proscription of behavior that affects daily life. It usually refers to impermissible behavior and includes such things as bans on naming a food restriction, prohibition on touching or reprimand a member of high social categories, dangerous animal, and injunction involving aspects of birth, death, and menstruation. Subsequently, (Fairman, 2009: 29) stated that taboo exists in every culture, whether it is in the form of acts and words. Taboo acts related to all the things that must be avoided, while taboo words relate to any words that are not supposed to say.

Based on the gap of various study, the difference can be seen from the analysis of the type and function of taboo words on each object which has different results, from each object have different most dominant types and most dominant functions of taboo words. In addition, the differences in this research are also found in the selection of research objects. The researcher uses dangdut pop song lyrics as objects because the genre of the song has not been analyzed. The song also has Indonesian and Javanese lyrics, which contain separate taboo words and are different from the use of western taboo words. The researcher expects that the results of this study can add information for the student is not allowed to use taboo words. This is because taboo words are not native to Indonesian culture and violate the norms of polite and ethical behavior that apply in Indonesia.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Sociolinguistic***

According to (Wardhaugh, 2006: 1) sociolinguistics examines humans in everyday lives, the way language works in society as well as the existence of social norms, policies, and also laws that related to the language. Moreover, in sociolinguistics, language is seen not only as an individual symptom, but also as a social phenomenon. Because people are social beings that are closely associated with the social group. From the above statement, sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary study that discusses linguistic relationships with social, contextual and cultural aspects. Therefore, people must pay attention to these aspects if they want to speak in society in order to reduce errors in using language when communicating with other people, for example, do not say impolite language such as taboo (Abdurrahman, 2011).

### ***Politeness and Solidarity***

Politeness is a system of interpersonal human communication designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential conflict inherent in all human interaction in the societies (Brown et al., 1987: 332). It is mean that politeness is showing good manners toward others, as in behavior, speech, etc. In this study, politeness plays a role in the use of taboo words in dangdut pop song lyrics. The use of taboo words in dangdut pop song lyrics includes negative politeness because it contains sexuality and harsh words. Besides being related to politeness, the word taboo also has an attachment to solidarity. Solidarity is unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest; mutual support within a group (Brown & Gilman, 1960: 253). Including solidarity because individuals have a common interest; support each other in a group by using taboo words.

### ***Definition of Taboo Words***

(Wardhaugh, 2006: 239) stated that taboo words are indecorous words that are not allowed to utter in everyday conversation because it relates to harsh meaning. The subjects deemed taboo varied widely, i.e. sex, death, excretion, bodily functions, religious matters, and politics. Every language has its own restrictions and rules, when someone breaks the rules by uttering taboo words, there will be various comments in society. Sometimes, taboo words are broken for several reasons, such as to draw attention to oneself, to show contempt, to be aggressive or provocative, or to mock authority.

### ***Taboo in Indonesian Perspective***

In Indonesia itself, there are still many taboo things that absolutely should not be done. For example, eating with the left hand, calling parents by name, public displays of affection, sex, and about ghosts or beliefs. Taboo words are an expression that should not be used in certain situations, especially about belief (Sitaresmi, Fasya, 2011: 118). Taboo is a prohibition or taboo on something, which if violated will impose penalties or sanctions for violators. By its nature, taboo can act as a form of social control in society. As a taboo social control draws a line between what can and should not be done. Taboos or prohibitions that live in Indonesian become a control that limits people's actions (Sitaresmi, Fasya, 2011: 119). For example, taboo to sit on a head pillow. This taboo provides limits for community actions so that the norm of decency is maintained. Because it is unethical for a person to put ass in a pillow which will then be used by someone else to put his head.

### ***Types of Taboo Words***

(Battistella, 2005: 72) classified taboo words into four types: epithet, profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity which are explained below.

#### 1) Epithet

Epithets are expressions which produced as an outburst of sudden emotion, curse, and usually done in high volume and powerful voices in the form of sudden frustrations or sense of hostility. Epithets refer to racial slurs, gender slurs, social status, animal slurs, psychological slurs, and disability.

#### 2) Profanity

According to Battistella, profanity can be categorized as religious cursing and death because it usually includes the foul-mouthed use of what is considered to be sacred. Profanity as the expression involving the use of religious terms in a profane, secular or uncaring manner. The aim of the

speaker is not to vilify God or anything connected with religion but it may be used to express emotional response to certain motives. The words that belong to this type are “*Jesus Christ*”, “*hell*”, “*imp*”, “*damn*”, and “*goddamn*”.

3) Vulgarity

Type of vulgarity words such as words involved with anatomy sexual or private parts of body and sexuality. Vulgarity is considered milder as it tends to be “offensive in language”, this type also used for flirting, jokes and get attention the audience.

4) Obscenity

Obscenity refers to expressions that are prohibited from public use since they involve repulsion to the sense, impolite and detestable to morality. Battistella (2005: 72) also explains obscenity also involves street rude words.

### ***Functions of Taboo Words***

Taboo words are usually uttered because there is a reason behind them. According to (Wardhaugh, 2006: 239) taboo words are disregarded in particular occasion because they have several functions such as to draw attention to oneself, to show contempt, to be provocative, and to mock authority. To give a clear explanation of the functions of taboo words, below are brief descriptions of the functions.

1) To Draw Attention to Oneself

Sometimes people utter taboo words in order to get the attention from the listener. The speakers should gain the interest through the use of strong language whose connotation and can stimulate an instant reaction from the audience. Therefore, people use taboo words which are believed to have power in gaining listener’s attention because of its strong connotation.

2) To Show Contempt

To show contempt is the impression in which a person or may be something is totally useless and cannot be regarded. In other words, when someone tries to show contempt by using taboo words, he or she disrespect feeling toward the audience and offending the self-esteem of the audience or others.

3) To Be Provocative

When someone utters taboo words, he or she may have an intention to provoke a certain response such as violation or anger from others. Verbal obscenity can be the most efficient symbolic process offered to protester intended for inviting chaotic reaction. Taboo words are considered successful when the response is suitable with the speaker’s expectation.

4) To Mock Authority

Sometimes people use taboo words when they are not satisfied with public images such as government and institutions. People used taboo words because they want to express their disappointment about reality that are different from what they have expected. Therefore, some people may prefer to use certain taboo words that are directed to mock authority in order to show their disbelief about governmental stuffs.

### ***Dangdut Pop Song***

Dangdut is an Indonesian music genre that collaborates with Malay, Indian, Islamic aesthetics, and electric guitar influences (Weintraub 2010: 16). Dangdut classic in the 80s is definitely different from dangdut in the 90s and 2000s. Dangdut in the 2000s was shocked by the emergence of Inul Daratista, controversy with its rocking. In the song, the dangdut music is arranged in such a way with variations of the drum that don't just sound dang and dut and tend to be fast beats. Actually, this type of music has become endemic in East Java, where dangdut music performances are often held with dangdut arrangements which in fact attract the public's interest to join in swaying to the beat of the song to this day.

While the dangdut category is divided into mandarin dangdut, disco dangdut, regional dangdut, pop dangdut and rock dangdut (Weintraub, 2012: 115). Pop dangdut is a type of dangdut song that is considered more populist, this is because the place of birth and development is indeed from that region. Thus, it is very natural that the lyrics of pop dangdut songs reveal more about the realities of life for the lower class or to vent various depressed feelings.

This is what makes researchers interested in analysis taboo words in dangdut pop song lyrics, because the dangdut song is an original song genre from Indonesia, many young people like dangdut pop song because is easy listening, and there are some dangdut song that banned for KPID to broadcast in television or radio.

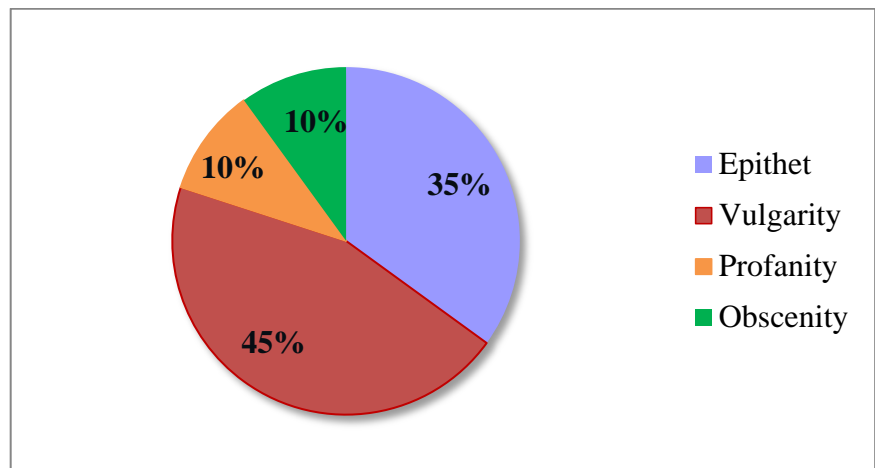
## **METHOD**

The researcher applies qualitative research and content analysis as the research design. The data were in the form of dangdut pop song lyrics, while the contexts of the data were the word and sentences uttered by the dangdut singers. The data were collected by selecting words and sentences containing taboo words after watching the video and reading the lyrics carefully.

## **FINDING**

From the analysis process, the total data collected in this research are 20 data types of taboo words. The data are displayed in chart 1 shows the frequency of the occurrence types of taboo words in dangdut pop song lyrics.

Chart 1. Frequency Types Taboo Words



### **1. Types of Taboo Words**

#### **a. Epithet**

Based on the chart 4.1 epithet becomes the second highest type of taboo words in dangdut pop song lyrics. It occurs 7 times and gets the percentage of 35%. Epithet includes a variety of slurs that are connected to race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, one's appearance, and disabilities.

#### **b. Vulgarity**

Vulgarity becomes the most dominant type of taboo words in dangdut pop song lyrics. It occurs 9 times and gets the percentage of 45%. Vulgarity includes a as words involved with anatomy sexual or private parts of body and sexuality.

#### **c. Profanity**

In the findings, the researcher finds 2 times types of profanity with percentage (10%). Profanity as the expression involving the use of religious terms in a profane, secular or uncaring manner.

#### **d. Obscenity**

In the findings, the researcher finds 2 times types of obscenity with percentage (10%). Obscenity includes the word in street word.

## **2. Functions of Taboo Words**

There are four functions of taboo words in the dangdut pop song lyrics, they are to draw attention to oneself, to be provocative, to show contempt, and to mock authority.

### **a. To Draw Attention to Oneself**

To draw attention to oneself appears 10 times in this research with the percentage of 68%. This function can occur when someone utters a taboo word which has a strong connotation to gain the listener's attention.

#### **a. To Show Contempt**

To show contempt appears 3 times in this research with the percentage of 20%. This function can occur when people utter taboo words to show their disrespect feeling toward the addressee.

#### **a. To be Provocative**

To be provocative appears 1 times in this research with the percentage of 6%. This function happens when a speaker utters taboo words to provoke a certain response from the listener such as violation or anger.

#### **a. To Mock Authority**

To mock authority appears 1 times in this research with the percentage of 6%. This function can occur when people utter taboo words because they are not satisfied with public images such as the government and institutions.

## **DISCUSSION**

From the result of the research, it can be drawn that there are many and varied types and functions in taboo words in dangdut pop song lyrics. The taboo words in 9 dangdut pop songs in this research used Javanese and Indonesian, meaning that dangdut songs containing taboo words make other people uncomfortable when they hear it, are prohibited and are strictly avoided in public places. The result of this research is that dangdut pop song lyrics are not recommended for students to avoid dangdut pop songs with taboo words and are not recommended to be sung. The number of taboo speeches in the open makes the public's sensitivity to taboo words increasingly thin. Therefore, this research needs to be done so that people know what categories are classified as taboo language and the function of using taboo



language in dangdut songs. Based on the explanation above, the researcher can conclude that taboo words in the lyrics of pop dangdut songs should not be used in daily conversation, should not be sung in public places, can make other people embarrassed when they hear it, and can offend others.

## CONCLUSION

In this research, the researcher found four types of taboo words in dangdut 9 dangdut pop song lyrics, they are epithet, profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity. Those type of taboo words are found in 20 data. The most frequent type of taboo words is vulgarity which occurs 9 times. The second most dominant type, there is ephitet in position which occurs 7 times. After that, profanity and obscenity ranks in the third, with the same occurs in 2 times.

In this research, the researcher found four functions taboo words in 9 dangdut pop song lyrics, they are to draw attention, to show contempt, to be provocative, and to mock authority. Those function of taboo words are found in 15 data. The most frequent functions of taboo words is to draw attention to oneself which occurs 10 times.

The second most dominant frequency function, there is to show contempt in position which occurs 3 times.. After that, to be provocative and to mock authority ranks in the third, with the same occurs in 1 times. From data of function to mock authority profanity found, there is one data used by dangdut singers. The singer rarely uses the to mock authority function to not satisfied with public images such as the government and institutions.

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