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Bachelor thesis

Analysis of grammatical errors in pop song lyrics

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Anotace

Práce bude zkoumat výskyt gramatických chyb v textech písní, řadících se do hudebního žánru pop-music. Teoretická část práce vymezí zkoumaný hudební styl, jeho charakteristiku a strukturu textů. Dále vymezí konvence, které existují v žánru textu popových písní a pravidla pro tvoření písňových textů s ohledem na propojení slova a hudby. Praktická část práce se zaměří na formu a obsah konkrétních textů, následnou analýzu a případnou možnost opravy excerpovaných chyb.

Abstrakt

The thesis will examine appearance of grammatical mistakes in popular song lyrics in pop-music genre. The theoretical part will define examined music style, its characteristics and the structure of the lyrics. It will also define conventions existing in lyrics of the pop songs and rules for creating song lyrics with respect to linking lyrics and music. The practical part will focus on the form and content of particular song lyrics, subsequent analysis and possible correction of excerpted mistakes.

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I. INTRODUCTION

My bachelor thesis consists of two parts – the theoretical part and the practical part.

In the theoretical part, I deal with songwriting in general as a process of writing lyrics and putting them together with a melody and harmony. I describe two methods of songwriting from my personal experience and I also explain some mistakes on examples of songs.

I have come across approximately ten different common mistake occurrences such as improper use of the objective pronoun, double negative or incorrect verb conjugation.

Each mistake occurrence is divided into its own subchapter, where I explain the grammar rules and I show grammatically incorrect cases on some examples of the song lyrics.

I also distinguish between grammar mistakes with a stylistic benefit to the song and the ones without.

In my reviews, I use some classical pop, rock, R'n'B, indie and folk songs which are very important to be mentioned. Each music genre has its own standards in terms of lyrics which is the reason why I do not include rap and hip hop songs in my reviews.

In the second, practical part I deal with songs from the Billboard magazine's charts. I work with the top 5 songs from each year from 1990 until 2017. I examine the song lyrics in search for grammar mistakes, then I explain the mistakes and I suggest suitable solution for some of them.

II. THEORETICAL PART

1. THE PROCESS OF SONGWRITING

Writing lyrics, or putting a song together in general is a process where the author should be able to follow some basic rules.

First of all, the lyrics should be brief, yet the meaning of them must make sense. Verses does not have to be based on rhyming, but they must follow some “rhythm patterns”, so that the author could actually harmonize them and come up with a nice, simple melody. For many authors, this seems to be the biggest issue. Finding and following the rhythm pattern along with an effort in rhyming makes many songwriters work with words or even phrases that are not particularly suitable in many cases or are even grammatically incorrect.

At the beginning of the process the songwriter chooses between starting with creating the melody first and the lyrics afterwards or lyrics first and then the melody to fit in the rhythm pattern of the lyrics. There is no right way, everything depends on preferences or which idea comes first.

Starting with melody first, the author must take into consideration more aspects at once. There’s this strictly given structure of the song and the songwriter has to fit the lyrics into the melody. It means obvious limitations specifically in the number of syllables. The benefit of starting with melody is partly creating the limitations of the number of syllables.

On the other hand, when the songwriter decides to start with the lyrics he/she must remember not to get too carried away by the amount of words, number of syllables or even thoughts he/she wants to fit in. The quote “less is more” doubles in songwriting particularly. It always helps to read the lyrics out loud to find out whether the lyrics fit in the rhythm pattern or not.

It is important to decide what the song is going to be about. Songwriting is basically expressing the same thought in multiple different ways. In case of having too many ideas it is essential to rather split the thoughts into two songs than pile too much into one song. ¹

¹ Writing Songs : The Songwriting Process : *How Music Works. How Music Works : Overview : How Music Works* [online]. Copyright © 1997 [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <http://www.howmusicworks.org/901/Writing-Songs/The-Songwriting-Process>

2. APPEARANCES OF MISTAKES

I have come across two different types of mistakes. The first one is with no stylistic benefit to the song and the second one is with the stylistic benefit, often used to make one word rhyme with another.

We must consider the fact that in popular music grammar is not essential. People are aware of song lyrics and that they are not always grammatically correct. There are many online discussions to prove this statement. From what I have learned from the users' posts is that the lyrics are being questioned mostly by non-native speakers, who naturally work with grammatical rules they know and they don't really count with slangs or dialects. Sometimes what appears to be incorrect is in fact common in spoken language, since songwriters use English that is natural for them.

2.1 THE FIRST TYPE

The first type usually appears due to the lack of judgment. The authors have no particular reason for using the words or phrases and in case they had an opportunity to change it, they would probably do so. Changing these words or phrases doesn't threaten any rhyming, rhythm patterns or even the meaning. As a great example is the improper use of the objective pronoun or subject – verb agreement in some cases.

2.2 THE SECOND TYPE

The second type of grammatical mistakes is when the incorrect part is beneficial to the song. It is often used when the author deals with some boundaries in the rhythm or to rhyme one word with another. In songs may appear incorrect spelling or even words created specially to fit the rhythm pattern that makes no sense without the context of the whole song.

3. HYPERCORRECTION

Besides obvious mistakes, we can also find non-standard usage resulting from the over-application of grammar rules as far as we know them or a usage prescription. We call this hypercorrection.

“A speaker or writer who produces a hypercorrection generally believes that the form is correct through misunderstanding of these rules, often combined with a desire to appear formal or educated.

Linguistic hypercorrection occurs when a real or imagined grammatical rule is applied in an inappropriate context, so that an attempt to be "correct" leads to an incorrect result. It does not occur when a speaker follows "a natural speech instinct.”²

According to *dailywritingtips.com*, hypercorrection has several categories of appearances such as “a number of” followed by a singular verb where “Occasionally, a superficial understanding of what constitutes proper grammar leads writers to create a disagreeable subject/verb agreement such as “A number of members is supporting reform.” But longstanding idiom trumps strict correctness: “A number of members are supporting reform” is correct, because the focus is on the members, not on the proportion of them supporting reform. The same common-sense rule holds for handful, majority, and similar terms. “³

Another type of hypercorrection is *as* in place of *like*. “Writers averse to *like* as an alternative to “*such as*” are also prone to replace *like* with *as* in such sentences as “He charges as a bull.” “He charges as a bull would do” is correct but stilted; the shorter form implies “He charges in the capacity of a bull,” rather than “He charges in the manner of a bull.” What’s not to like about like?”⁴

² MENNER, Robert J. *Hypercorrect Forms in American English*. *American Speech* [online]. 1937, 12(3), 167- [cit. 2018-04-17]. DOI: 10.2307/452423. ISSN 00031283. Dostupné z: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/452423?origin=crossref>

³ 10 Types of Hypercorrection. *Daily Writing Tips* [online]. Copyright © 2017 Daily Writing Tips . All Right Reserved [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://www.dailywritingtips.com/10-types-of-hypercorrection/>

⁴ 10 Types of Hypercorrection. *Daily Writing Tips* [online]. Copyright © 2017 Daily Writing Tips . All Right Reserved [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://www.dailywritingtips.com/10-types-of-hypercorrection/>

The last mentioned type is the personal pronoun “I” substituted for the object “me”. “Some people, when they learn that the object in such constructions as “You and me are the same height” and “Me and John are the candidates” should read “You and I are the same height” and “John and I are the candidates,” generalize that me is an undesirable pronoun, even when used in a sentence’s subject, but “There’s no difference in height between you and me” and “The candidates are John and me,” unlike the sentence versions ending in the word I, are perfectly correct.”⁵

⁵ 10 Types of Hypercorrection. *Daily Writing Tips* [online]. Copyright © 2017 Daily Writing Tips . All Right Reserved [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://www.dailywritingtips.com/10-types-of-hypercorrection/>

4. MISTAKE CATEGORIES

4.1 IMPROPER USE OF THE OBJECTIVE PRONOUN

For songwriters learning English as a second language pronouns can be difficult because they are expressed differently in their language.

*“Pronouns are words which stand for a noun, a whole noun phrase, or several noun phrases, or which refer directly to some aspect of the situation. In each case, the meaning expressed is much less specific than that found in phrases containing noun.”*⁶

We can distinguish the following subtypes of pronouns: personal, reflexive, reciprocal, possessive, demonstrative, relative, interrogative and indefinite pronouns.

The biggest issue for songwriters is choosing between the subject and object pronoun, both of them are the two cases of personal pronouns.

Subject pronouns are used to substitute the subject of the verb.

Object pronouns are used instead of nouns, usually in order to avoid repetition of nouns.

As an example of using an incorrect subtype I am going to use the phrase from Paula Cole’s *“I Don’t Want To Wait”* – *“So open your morning light and say a little prayer for I.”*⁷

I have underlined words that are the very last on each line and are clearly meant to be rhyming, yet they are grammatically incorrect. The personal pronoun “I” was used on purpose to complete the rhyme with “light”. In this case I would suggest swapping “I” for “me” – which gives us a grammatically correct phrase, the next step would be swapping “light” for a more suitable word to complete rhyming and keep the rhythm pattern.

Next example of this kind of mistake but with no benefit to the song would be Lady Gaga’s *“Bad Romance”*. The refrain is *“I want your love and I want your revenge, you and me could write a bad romance”*. In this case there is no logical explanation for incorrect use of “you and me” instead of the correct form “you and I”. Using the personal

⁶ CRYSTAL, David. *The Cambridge encyclopedia of the English language*. 2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003. ISBN 052182348x. Page 210

⁷ Paula Cole – I Don’t Want to Wait Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Paula-cole-i-dont-want-to-wait-lyrics>

pronoun “I” would keep the rhythm pattern, the whole meaning would stay the same and it would not even threaten the rhyming.

*“Ironically, Gaga makes the opposite error in her other single, which is actually titled **You and I**:*

Something, something about my cool Nebraska guy

Yeah something about, baby, you and I.

Gaga has misused her pronouns in both of these songs. The pronoun I is used when the I in question is the subject of the sentence, while the pronoun me is used when the me that is referred to is the object of the sentence.

*The easiest way to remember when to use I versus when to use me is to remove the other noun or pronoun from the sentence. So, in the case of “**Bad Romance**”, we would test this by saying “I want your revenge / Me could write a bad romance.” When the lyric is written like this, it becomes clear that the correct pronoun here is “I”, because “I” is the subject of the sentence in question. Conversely, for “**You and I**”, we can test the lyric by saying “Something about, baby, I.” You would never say “something about I.” This should be “something about me,” because me is the object of the sentence. The lyric should thus be “something about, baby, you and me”⁸*

⁸ *Grammar Errors in Your Favorite Songs. Writing Courses | Inklyo.com [online]. Copyright © 2018 Inklyo.com. All Rights Reserved. [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://www.inklyo.com/grammar-errors-in-songs/>*

4.2 MISPELLED LYRICS

There are many songs where the actual spelling is part of the song performance. Usually singers spell the word and repeat it as a whole. I would not consider this as a major grammar mistake because unlike other mistakes I present here, we cannot be always sure, whether the author used an incorrectly spelled word on purpose in order to present for example a brand that is somehow connected to the singer or band and carries the name, that is suitable and fun to be included in the song.

As an example of a wrong spelling, where I am not aware of any additional intention, I am going to use Fergie`s song called **Fergalicious**. She spells the word TASTY as T-A-S-T-E-Y.

4.3 MAKING UP WORDS TO COMPLETE A RHYME

Grammar mistakes used mostly when the author needs to complete the rhyme or fill up the rhythm pattern. As an example, I am going to use Gwen Stefani`s **Bubble Pop Electric**, where the rhyme goes *“I`m restless, can`t you see I try my bestest”*.

“English has a few adjectives whose comparative and superlative forms are irregular. That is, they don't form the usual patterns for forming comparatives and superlatives (-er, -est; or -ier, iest; or more-, most-).”⁹

Gwen Stefani used the superlative form of the word *good* incorrectly, yet the reason for that is very obvious. She was looking for a word to complete the rhyme with *restless* and keep the rhythm pattern. In case she used the superlative form correctly the line would go *“I`m restless, can`t you see I try my best”*.

Another example is Justin Timberlake`s **What Goes Around** – *“When you cheated girl, my heart bleded girl”*. The word *bleed* is on the list of irregular English verbs. We don`t create the past simple and past participle just by adding –ed, which is exactly what Justin Timberlake did. Therefore, I would say that he created a completely new word, since the correct form is *bled*. Again, I understand the meaning and I see the reason why

⁹ Adjectives - Good, Better and Best - English (ESL) Weblog. *English Language (ESL) Learning Online - UsingEnglish.com* [online]. Copyright © 2002 [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://www.usingenglish.com/weblog/archives/000029.html>

he did it. The grammatically correct version would be “*When you cheated girl, my heart bled girl*”. This version changed the rhythm pattern slightly, yet for using this version with an instrumental background it is a significant change.

4.4 HONORABLE MENTION

“**God Bless the USA**” by Lee Greenwood – “*I am proud to be an American, where at least I know I’m free*”. We cannot refer to this line as to the grammatically incorrect one. Yet is it acceptable to connect “an American” with “where”? ¹⁰

Regina Haniger on “Am I Right” wrote the best explanation:

“While the singer's patriotic sentiments are touching, the relationship of dependent and independent clauses here just doesn't work. That is because the connector, where, is a place-referent connector and therefore needs an antecedent of place in the independent clause. But there is no antecedent of place. That is to say, "I'm proud to be in America, where at least I know I'm free" would work grammatically, but the actual lines here don't, since "an American" does not imply a place, but is followed by "where", which needs to refer back to a place.” ¹¹

4.5 THE USE OF AIN'T

According to *The Cambridge Guide to English Usage*, *ain't* is associated with informal, casual and dialectal speech and comes from spoken language as well as from written text.¹²

“Ain't is a centuries-old contraction meaning am not, is not, are not, has not, or have not. The word has been derided by usage authorities throughout its history, and

¹⁰ Haniger, R., Am I Right - Bad Grammar in Song Lyrics, Lee Greenwood. *Am I Right - Misheard Lyrics, Song Parodies, music humor and satire*[online]. Copyright © 2000 [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <http://www.amiright.com/names/bad-grammar/greenwoodlee.shtml>

¹¹ Haniger, R., Am I Right - Bad Grammar in Song Lyrics, Lee Greenwood. *Am I Right - Misheard Lyrics, Song Parodies, music humor and satire*[online]. Copyright © 2000 [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <http://www.amiright.com/names/bad-grammar/greenwoodlee.shtml>

¹² PETERS, Pam. *The Cambridge guide to English usage*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004. ISBN 978-0-521-62181-6, page 27

*it's still considered unacceptable in formal writing, but it has a secure place in spoken English. In edited writing, ain't is mainly used tongue-in-cheek, as part of a common expression, or in an effort to sound folksy. "*¹³

In music lyrics *ain't* is very common in rap and hip hop and is not considered to be grammatically incorrect, but rather informal.

As an example of using *ain't* in a song I am going to use ***If I Ain't Got You*** by Alicia Keys where *ain't* appears right in the title and then repeatedly throughout the song.

4.5.1 COLLOQUIALISM

Colloquial speech is an ordinary, relaxed, informal speech we use in situations when we are relaxed and unselfconscious. It contains words and expressions we would not use in formal contexts. We choose when it is appropriate to use colloquialism and when formal speech.¹⁴

Colloquial speech is not the same as slang. *"Many people, when speaking colloquially, make liberal use of slang, while others use little or no slang: in colloquial speech, slang is admissible but not obligatory. "*¹⁵

¹³ Ain't - Grammarist. Grammarist - English Grammar, *Grammar Rules and tips - English grammar, usage, and style blog* [online]. Copyright © Copyright 2009 [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <http://grammarist.com/usage/aint/>

¹⁴ TRASK, R. L. *Key concepts in language and linguistics*. New York: Routledge, 1999. ISBN 0-415-15742-0.

¹⁵ TRASK, R. L. *Key concepts in language and linguistics*. New York: Routledge, 1999. ISBN 0-415-15742-0.

4.6 DOUBLE NEGATIVES

The term “double negatives” means two forms of negation in one sentence. “A double negative uses two negative words (in **bold** below) in the same clause to express a single negative idea:

*We didn't see **nothing**. [= We saw nothing.]*

*She **never** danced with **nobody**. [= She didn't dance with anybody.]*

The rules dictate that the two negative elements cancel each other out to give a positive statement instead, so that the sentence ‘I don't know nothing’ could literally be interpreted as ‘I do know something’.”¹⁶

As an example, I am going to use a well-known song “***I Can't Get No (Satisfaction)***” by The Rolling Stones, or Pink Floyd's ***Another Brick in the Wall***, where the chorus goes: “*We don't Need No Education*”. In this double negative, the phrase literally means: we do not need NO education, which is understood as: we DO need education.

Another example is ***Shape of My Heart*** by Backstreet Boys.

“I'm here with my confession

Got nothing to hide no more

I don't know where to start

But to show you the shape of my heart.”¹⁷

If they “got nothing to hide no more”, then they would probably be hiding something. Which is not what the author intended.

Ain't No Sunshine by Bill Withers - The double negative in the title and repeated throughout the song. *Ain't* meaning *is not* gives us *there is not no sunshine*. This would mean that there IS sunshine when she is gone. Again, something that the author did not want to say, according to the context of the song.

¹⁶ Double negatives | *Oxford Dictionaries. English Dictionary, Thesaurus, & grammar help* | Oxford Dictionaries [online]. Copyright © 2018 Oxford University Press [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/grammar/double-negatives>

¹⁷ Backstreet Boys – *Shape of My Heart Lyrics* | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Backstreet-boys-shape-of-my-heart-lyrics>

4.7 THE SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Mistakes caused by improper use of the subject verb agreement can be both – with and without any stylistic benefit.

“The key to subject-verb agreement is matching the number of both; singular subjects take singular verb forms, as plural subjects take plural verb forms. The trick is to recognize singular v. plural subjects, which is not always easy (an “s” at the end of a word is not the only sign of subject plurality), and to know the difference between singular and plural verb forms.

Subject-verb agreement can be difficult due to the irregularity of English plural subjects; many are not marked with an “s” at the end. Even for native-English speakers, subject-verb agreement can be a difficult concept to grasp. There are several rules to follow, and some of them just require practice so that they become familiar.”¹⁸

According to William Strunk jr. it is important to realize and use some subject-verb agreement rules to prevent mistakes.¹⁹

Forgetting about adding “s” to the following verb in 3rd person is a mistake that even many native speakers do. As an example, I am going to use Justin Bieber’s **Love Yourself** to demonstrate this grammatical mistake.

*“My mama **don't** like you and she likes everyone
And I never like to admit that I was wrong
And I've been so caught up in my job
Didn't see what's going on
And now I know
I'm better sleeping on my own.”²⁰*

¹⁸ Common Errors - Subject-Verb Agreement | *World-Leading Language Solutions* by WhiteSmoke. *English Grammar Checker Software* | WhiteSmoke | World-Leading Language Solutions by WhiteSmoke [online]. Dostupné z: <http://www.whitesmoke.com/subject-verb-agreement-common-errors-in-english>

¹⁹ STRUNK, William a E. B. WHITE. *The elements of style*. 4th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, c1999. ISBN 0-205-30902-x.

²⁰ Justin Bieber – Love Yourself Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Justin-bieber-love-yourself-lyrics>

The mistake appears in the first line of the pre-chorus of the song. This case is clearly with a stylistic benefit. The songwriter used monosyllabic *don't* rather than disyllabic *doesn't* to shorten the line as much as possible.

4.8 INCORRECT VERB CONJUGATION

One of the most discussed grammar “mistakes” in popular music was Eric Clapton’s song ***Lay Down Sally***. Lay is the present tense form of the transitive verb lay, which means that it needs a direct object. Thus, what Clapton is really saying in this song is that someone should physically lay down Sally, but what he obviously meant to say is that Sally should lie down; hence, the correct form of the title according to prescribers is Lie Down Sally.

Savage Garden made the same “mistake” in their song ***Truly, Madly, Deeply***, where Darren Hayes sings, “*I want to lay like this*”.

The difference between Lie and Lay is clear. Lie is for lying down, to make oneself horizontal on a surface, it does not carry an object. On the other hand, lay requires an object, i.e. you are laying something on a table.²¹

Another example is Bonnie Raitt’s ***I Can’t Make You Love Me***. At the very beginning of the song Bonnie Raitt sings “*Lay down with me, tell me no lies*”. The mistake is visible especially after making it clear in the previous paragraph. To make grammatically correct version the lyrics would go “*Lie down with me, tell me no lies*”.

All of the three here presented mistakes in songs are used with no benefit to it. The pronunciation of both *lay* and *lie* is the same, it does not threaten any rhyming or rhythm pattern.

4.9 WAS FOR WERE

In deciding whether to choose *was* or *were* it is necessary to know the difference between using the subjunctive mood and indicative mood.

The past tense of “*to be*” and subjunctive form of “*to be*” is exactly the same in the second person singular (*you*), the first person plural (*we*), the second person plural

²¹ 20 Songs with Really Bad Grammar - Hooks and Harmony. *Hooks and Harmony - Pop music and 80s music especially for you*. [online]. Copyright © 2018. [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <http://www.hooksandharmony.com/20-songs-bad-grammar/>

(*you*) and the third person plural (*they*). This means that we only have to make a decision between choosing *was* / *were* in the first person singular (*I*) and the third person singular (*he, she, it*).

“The key to understanding when to use was or were in a sentence is determining whether you need to use the subjunctive mood or not.

*The subjunctive mood is a verb form that is used for unreal or hypothetical statements. It is made up of the phrases *I were, he were, she were, it were, etc.* You often use this form when you are being wishful.”²²*

As an example, I am going to use Clay Aiken’s song called ***Invisible***, where he sings, *“If I was invisible, and I could just watch you in your room”*. Being invisible is in subjunctive mood therefore the correct term would be *if I were invisible*.

4.10 WHO VS. THAT

Using *that* instead of *who* when the author refers to a human being is one of the most frequent mistakes in popular song lyrics. *Who* is a relative pronoun we use to refer to a human being, on the other hand *that* is a relative pronoun we use to refer to anything but a human being. For example, sentence *Amanda is the girl that wrote that song* is incorrect while *Amanda is the girl who wrote that song* is correct. Nevertheless, using *that* when *who* is suited is not something that would be considered a huge grammar mistake.

“The media often uses that with a person, such as “The person that robbed the bank also robbed the store because the media wants to dehumanize the report—they want it to be dry and factual, not human.” While commonly used in that way, it’s wrong. A person, even a criminal, is animate.

There is also confusion about which to use when referring to animals—do they warrant a who or a that? That’s often a matter of personal opinion and usage. It’s hard to imagine that many of us would consider an ant to be a who; however, most of us probably consider good ol’ Rover to be a who. I’ve heard it recommended that named

²² Was vs. Were: What’s the Difference? - Writing Explained. *Grammar, Style, and Usage - Writing Explained* [online]. Copyright © 2018 [cit. 17.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://writingexplained.org/was-vs-were-difference>

animals should be paired with who, and unnamed animals should be paired with that. In other words, both Whiskers is the cat who we all love and This is the cat that we all love would be correct.

Regardless of the instances of understandable confusion, there should be no confusion when dealing with people—while the point may seem debatable at times, we're all worthy of being referred to as who rather than that.”²³

As an example, I am going to use TLC's **No Scrubs**. The author is referring to a scrub as “a guy that thinks he fly”. I would suggest using the suitable relative pronoun and swap *that* for *who*.

We would not change the meaning or the rhythm pattern so this change would be without a stylistic benefit to the song.

Another example is Police's **Every Little Thing She Does is Magic**, which goes as the following: “*It's always me that ends up getting wet*”. This is basically the same case as the previous one. Swapping *that* for *who* would be sufficient.

I have purposely chosen these two examples because many of this type of grammatical errors are made by people who are greatly influenced by slang, which is the first case. In case of Police's song we talk rather about artists who tend not to take such liberties with the English language.

In conclusion, we can state that using *that* for *who* as a relative pronoun for human beings that can be found quite often in popular songs lyrics. We can say that this type of construction is not so common. By this I mean sentences with two clauses, where the relative points to an antecedent, is not considered to be a common feature of lyrics in popular songs.

²³ Who Versus That | *Everything Language and Grammar*. *Everything Language and Grammar* [online]. Dostupné z: <https://languageandgrammar.com/2008/02/21/who-versus-that/>

III. PRACTICAL PART

The practical part of this thesis focuses on the most successful songs in the past 27 years. I have chosen five top songs of each year and examine the lyrics. In case there was a mistake I explain the grammar, why it is considered a mistake and attempt to make a correction.

I intentionally leave out rap and hip hop songs from my reviews because of the frequent occurrence of slang expressions and dialects.

#Top 5 of 1990

According to Billboard magazine's the top 5 songs of 1990's were *Hold On* by *Wilson Phillips*, *It Must Have Been Love* by *Roxette*, *Nothing Compares 2 U* by *Sinéad O'Connor*, *Poison* by *Bell Biv DeVoe* and *Vogue* by *Madonna*.

The only grammar mistake I have found was in *Poison* by *Bell Biv DeVoe*, where the lyric goes as following:

*"Poison, deadly, movin' in **slow**
Lookin for a mellow fellow like DeVoe
Gettin paid, laid, so better lay low
Schemin on house, money, and the whole show"*²⁴

Bell Biv DeVoe used adjectival form of the word *slow*, where instead he should have used an adverbial form adding the suffix *-ly* – *slowly*. The reason for using *slow* instead of *slowly* is obvious. Using the correct form would influence the rhyming with *DeVoe*.

#Top 5 of 1991

In 1991 the top 5 songs according to Billboard magazine were (*Everything I Do*) *I Do It For You* by *Bryan Adams*, *I Wanna Sex You Up* by *Color Me Badd*, *Gonna Make You*

²⁴ Bell Biv DeVoe – Poison Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Bell-biv-devoe-poison-lyrics>

Sweat (Everybody Dance Now) by C+C Music Factory, *Rush Rush* by Paula Abdul and *One More Try* by Timmy T.

(Everything I Do) I Do It For You by Brian Adams, *Rush Rush* by Paula Abdul and *One More Try* by Timmy T. are without significant grammar errors. On the other hand, some were found in *I Wanna Sex You Up* by Color Me Badd and in *Gonna Make You Sweat (Everybody Dance Now)* by C+C Music Factory.

In *I Wanna Sex You Up*, the verse with a mistake goes as following:

*“Make sweet **lovin'** all night long
I wanna sex you up
Feels so right it can't be wrong
Don't be shy girl rescue me
I wanna sex you up
Open up your heart and I'll set you free”*²⁵

In the first line – *make sweet lovin' all night long*, the author used *lovin'* as a direct object. Direct objects are supposed to be nouns, pronouns or noun phrases. In this case, *lovin'* is an adjective or a gerund.

In the song *Gonna Make You Sweat*, the verse goes as following:

*“The music takes control, your heart and soul
Unfold, your body is free and **a whole**
Dance till you can't, dance
Till you can't dance no more
Get on the floor and get raw
Then come back and upside down
Easy now, let me see ya”*²⁶

The error appears in using the indefinite article which precedes the noun *whole*.

²⁵ Color Me Badd - I Wanna Sex You Up Lyrics | MetroLyrics. Song Lyrics | MetroLyrics [online]. Copyright © 2018 CBS Interactive Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <http://www.metrolyrics.com/i-wanna-sex-you-up-lyrics-color-me-badd.html>

²⁶ C+C Music Factory – Gonna Make You Sweat (Everybody Dance Now) Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge[online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/C-c-music-factory-gonna-make-you-sweat-everybody-dance-now-lyrics>

#Top 5 of 1992

The top 5 songs in 1992 were *End of the Road* by Boyz II Men, *Baby Got Back* by Sir Mix-a-Lot, *Jump* by Kriss Kross, *Save the Best for Last* by Vanessa Williams and *Baby-Baby-Baby* by TLC.

In most of these songs appears at least a questionable use of *ain't* causing double negation which I am not going to be reviewing due to unclear intentions of contexts in the songs.

In *Baby-Baby-Baby* by TLC the very first verse goes:

*“Now you want my love, well that's alright
Well it will be there for you, morning, noon and night
But you gotta be good, and do it right
Ain't got no time for part-time lovin' in my life
Well you wanna be loved, huh, hey that's okay
Cause it falls in line right with my sexuality
But you gotta be down, a nigga gotta be true
Cause otherwise this B ain't got no time for you, oh”*²⁷

Ain't got no time is technically incorrect, yet the native speakers would recognize the meaning. Double negative appearing in this phrase would change the meaning from intended *there is no time* to *there isn't no time* which is understood as *there IS time*.

#Top 5 of 1993

In 1993 the top 5 songs again according to the Billboard magazine were *I Will Always Love You* by Whitney Houston, *Whoomp! (There It Is)* by Tag Team, *Can't Help Falling in Love* by UB40, *That's the Way Love Goes* by Janet Jackson and *Freak Me* by Silk.

In *I Will Always Love You*, Whitney sings:

*“I hope life treats you **kind**
And I hope you have all you've dreamed of*

²⁷ TLC – Baby Baby Baby Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Tlc-baby-baby-lyrics>

*And I wish you joy and happiness
But above all this I wish you love”²⁸*

Whitney uses adjectival form of the word *kind* where she should've used adverbial form adding the suffix *-ly*. This verse is not very strict in terms of the rhythm pattern, there is also a different melody than in the previous one. Therefore, I would not consider this error to be beneficial to the song.

I have found many questionable phrases in *Whoomp! (There It Is)* by *Tag Team* I am not going to be reviewing. Most of them are common in this particular music genre which I intentionally do not work with.

#Top 5 of 1994

The top 5 songs of 1994 were *The Sign* by *Ace of Base*, *I Swear* by *All-4-One*, *I'll Make Love to You* by *Boyz II Men*, *The Power of Love* by *Céline Dion* and *Hero* by *Mariah Carey*.

The only two errors worth mentioning appeared in *I'll Make Love to You* by *Boyz II Men*.

*“Girl relax, let's go **slow**
I ain't got nowhere to go
I'm just gonna concentrate on you
Girl are you ready?
It's gonna be a long night”²⁹*

The first line contains a grammatical error I have discussed before. *Slow* is an adjectival form, in this case it is necessary to use an adverbial form adding the suffix *-ly*. Using the correct form would affect the second line where *slow* rhymes with *to go*.

The second grammar error is *I ain't got nowhere to go*. Based on the whole context of this verse the double negative changed the intended meaning to the exact

²⁸ Whitney Houston – I Will Always Love You Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Whitney-houston-i-will-always-love-you-lyrics>

²⁹ Boyz II Men – I'll Make Love to You Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Boyz-ii-men-ill-make-love-to-you-lyrics>

opposite. The meaning of the line is *I have **somewhere** to go* instead of *I have **nowhere** to go*. This mistake is without a benefit to the song, so it could be easily substituted by a different phrase of the same meaning.

#Top 5 of 1995

In 1995 the top 5 songs were *Gangsta's Paradise* by Coolio featuring L.V., *Waterfalls* by TLC, *Creep* by TLC, *Kiss from a Rose* by Seal and *On Bended Knee* by Boyz II Men.

The first grammatical error was found in Coolio's *Gangsta's Paradise* where the verse goes:

*"But I ain't never crossed
a man that didn't deserve it.
Me be treated like a punk,
you know that's unheard of."*³⁰

I ain't never works as a double negative. The meaning according to the context of the song is the exact opposite of *I haven't never crossed*. In this case I would consider using *ain't + never* to intensify the negativity and therefore I would not take this phrase as its positive inversion after cancelling the double negativity but as *I have never crossed*.

The second error in the same verse is *a man that didn't deserve it*. The author used pronoun *that* instead of *who*, when he refers to a human being. Because of the same number of syllables in *that* and *who* and also the fact that in the middle of the phrase it does not affect any rhyming, using the incorrect pronoun *that* is not beneficial to the song.

In *Waterfalls* by TLC the verse containing grammar error goes:

*"I seen rainbow yesterday
But too many storms have come and gone
Leavin' a trace of not on God-given ray*

³⁰ Coolio – Gangsta's Paradise Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Coolio-gangstas-paradise-lyrics>

Is it because my life is ten shades of gray

I pray all ten fade away”³¹

The very first line of this verse says *I seen rainbow* yesterday. The correct past simple of *see* is *saw* which should have been used instead of *seen*. Using correct form would not threaten the rhyming or the rhythm pattern.

The last song of 1995 with a grammatical error out of the top five reviewed is *Creep* by TLC.

“But I’m not buggin’ ‘cause I still feel the same

I keep giving loving till the day he pushes me away

Never go a stray.”³²

Loving as an adjective or gerund cannot be used as a direct object of the verb. The correct version of this phrase would be *I keep giving **love** till the day he pushes me away*.

#Top 5 of 1996

In 1996 the top 5 songs according to Billboard magazine were *Macarena (Bayside Boys Mix)* by Los del Río, *One Sweet Day* by Mariah Carey and Boyz II Men, *Because You Loved Me* by Céline Dion, *Nobody Knows* by The Tony Rich Project and *Always Be My Baby* by Mariah Carey.

The first mistake appeared in *One Sweet Day* by Mariah Carey. In one of the verses she sings:

“Lord I know when I lay me down to sleep

You will always listen as I pray.”³³

³¹ TLC – Waterfalls Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Tlc-waterfalls-lyrics>

³² TLC – Creep Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Tlc-creep-lyrics>

³³ Boyz II Men – One Sweet Day Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Boyz-ii-men-one-sweet-day-lyrics>

Mariah Carey used the object case of the personal pronoun instead of the reflexive pronoun. The correct version would be *Lord I know when I lay **myself** down to sleep*. She probably used *me* instead of *myself* to shorten the syllables in the line.

In The Tony Rich Project's *Nobody Knows* the lyrics are:

***"I pretended that I'm glad you went away
But these four walls close in more every day."***³⁴

The error appears in tenses. The beginning is in the past tense where it should have stayed. Instead of that it gets to the present and back to the past. The correct version would be *I pretended that I was glad you went away*.

#Top 5 of 1997

The top 5 songs of 1997 were *Something About the Way You Look Tonight / Candle in the Wind, Foolish Games / You Were Meant for Me* by Jewel, *I'll Be Missing You* by Puff Daddy featuring Faith Evans and 112, *Un-Break My Heart* by Toni Braxton and *Can't Nobody Hold Me Down* by Puff Daddy featuring Mase.

In *I'll Be Missing You*, Puff Daddy raps:

***"Even though you're gone, **we still** a team
Through your family, I'll fulfill your dream"***³⁵

The second half of the first line would be considered as an incomplete sentence because of the lack of the verb. Adding the verb would not affect the rhythm or rhyming. The sentence after the correction would be *Even though you're gone, we're still a team*.

Next song, I have found some non-traditional phrases in is Puff Daddy's *Can't Nobody Hold Me Down*. Except using double negatives and *ain't* he also uses questionable structures of sentences such as:

³⁴ Boyzone – Nobody Knows Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Boyzone-nobody-knows-lyrics>

³⁵ Puff Daddy – I'll Be Missing You Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Puff-daddy-ill-be-missing-you-lyrics>

*"Simply a lot of **men be wantin'** to hear me
'Cause their words just don't offend me"³⁶*

#Top 5 of 1998

In 1998 the top 5 songs according to Billboard magazine were *Too Close* by Next, *The Boy Is Mine* by Brandy and Monica, *You're Still the One* by Shania Twain, *Truly Madly Deeply* by Savage Garden and *How Do I Live* by LeAnn Rimes.

In *Truly Madly Deeply* by Savage Garden the chorus goes:

*"I want **to lay** like this forever,
Until the sky falls down on me."³⁷*

According to the context of the song, the wrong form of the verb *lie* was used. The verb *lie* meaning to be in a horizontal position, which is suitable in this case, has the infinitive form *to lie*.

#Top 5 of 1999

The top 5 songs of 1999 were *Believe* by Cher, *No Scrubs* by TLC, *Angel of Mine* by Monica, *Heartbreak Hotel* by Whitney Houston featuring Faith Evans and Kelly Price, and *...Baby One More Time* by Britney Spears.

Out of all five top songs of 1999 only one contains a grammatical error worth mentioning. In TLC's *No Scrub* the very beginning of the song goes:

*"No, I don't want no scrub
A scrub is a guy **that** can't get no love from me."³⁸*

The second line confirms that *a scrub* is a designation for a human being therefore using the pronoun *that* instead of *who* to explain further details about the

³⁶ Puff Daddy – Can't Nobody Hold Me Down (original radio edit) Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Puff-daddy-cant-nobody-hold-me-down-original-radio-edit-lyrics>

³⁷ Savage Garden – Truly Madly Deeply Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Savage-garden-truly-madly-deeply-lyrics>

³⁸ TLC – No Scrubs Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Tlc-no-scrubs-lyrics>

person is incorrect. Using *who* would not affect the song in rhyming or threaten the rhythm.

#Top 5 of 2000

In 2000 the top 5 singles were *Breathe* by Faith Hill, *Smooth* by Santana featuring Rob Thomas, *Maria Maria* by Santana featuring The Product G&B, *I Wanna Know* by Joe and *Everything You Want* by Vertical Horizon.

The first song containing a grammatical errors is *Maria Maria* by Carlos Santana featuring The Product G&B. First one is in the subject-verb agreement.

“Maria, Maria

***She remind me** of a West Side story*

*Growing up in Spanish Harlem.”*³⁹

Because of the singular pronoun *she* that precedes *remind* the correct form would be *reminds*.

Another mistake in the same song is in the following verse.

“Pick pocking on the corner

*See as the **rich is getting richer.**”*⁴⁰

Rich is considered to be a plural noun therefore it cannot be followed by the verb in singular. The correct version would be *See as the rich **are** getting richer*.

#Top 5 of 2001

In 2001 the top 5 songs according to Billboard magazine were *Hanging by a Moment* by Lifehouse, *Fallin’* by Alicia Keys, *All for You* by Janet Jackson, *Drops of Jupiter (Tell Me)* by Train and *I’m Real* by Jennifer Lopez featuring Ja Rule.

The only grammar error worth mentioning is In Jennifer Lopez’s *I’m Real*.

³⁹ Santana – Maria Maria Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Santana-maria-maria-lyrics>

⁴⁰ Santana – Maria Maria Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Santana-maria-maria-lyrics>

*“What you get is what you see
What **you tryin'** to do to me.”⁴¹*

The second line is not grammatically correct because of the lack of the verb. Adding *are* would not affect the rhythm or rhyming if we used a contraction. The correct version would be *What you're tryin' to do to me.*

#Top 5 of 2002

The top 5 songs of 2002 were *How You Remind Me* by Nickelback, *Foolish* by Ashanti, *Hot in Herre* by Nelly, *Dilemma* by Nelly featuring Kelly Rowland and *Wherever You Will Go* by The Calling.

The only error worth mentioning was in the song *Foolish* by Ashanti.

*“All the things that we accept
Be the things that we regret.”⁴²*

Based on the context of the song, the second line is a continuation of the first line which uses incorrect form of the verb *be* instead of the correct form *are*. The verb needs to be in plural because it is linked to the plural subject *things* in the first line.

I have also found some mistakes and questionable phrases in Nelly's *Hot in Herre* and *Dilemma*, such as lack of a linking verb, main verb etc. I am not going to discuss any further details about errors in these songs because of its music genre I initially do not work with.

#Top 5 of 2003

The top 5 songs of 2003 were *In da Club* by 50 Cent, *Ignition (Remix)* by R. Kelly, *Get Busy* by Sean Paul, *Crazy in Love* by Beyoncé featuring Jay-Z and *When I'm Gone* by 3 Doors Down.

⁴¹ Jennifer Lopez - I'm Real Lyrics | MetroLyrics. Song Lyrics | MetroLyrics [online]. Copyright © 2018 CBS Interactive Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <http://www.metrolyrics.com/im-real-lyrics-jennifer-lopez.html>

⁴² Ashanti – Foolish Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Ashanti-foolish-lyrics>

Some categories of non-standard and questionable phrases such as subject-verb agreement, lack of the main verb, etc. appears in the song *In Da Club* by 50 Cent. I am not going to specify these errors any further because of the music genre of the song I initially do not work with.

In R. Kelly's *Ignition*, some verses lack the third person in plural of the verb *be* and also non-suitable verbs are used in this song.

"Runnin' her hands through my fro'

Bouncin' on twenty fo's

While they sayin' on the radio" ⁴³

Firstly, I would suggest swapping the verb *sayin'* for *talking* or *speaking*. Next is adding the third person plural verb *are*.

Beyoncé in her song *Crazy In Love* has also some grammatically incorrect parts.

"When I talk to my friends so quietly

Who he think he is? Look at what you did to me." ⁴⁴

The question *who he think he is?* is grammatically incorrect because the third person singular of the verb *do* is left out. The correct solution would be *who **does** he think he is?*

Sean Paul's *Get Busy* is full of questionable and non-standard phrases which are, in many cases based on slang and the area Sean Paul is from and I am not going to discuss any of them.

#Top 5 of 2004

In 2004 the top 5 songs according to Billboard magazine were *Yeah!* By Usher featuring Lil Jon and Ludacris, *Burn* by Usher, *If I Ain't Got You* by Alicia Keys, *This Love* by Maroon 5 and *The Way You Move* by Outkast featuring Sleepy Brown.

⁴³ R. Kelly – Ignition (Remix) Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/R-kelly-ignition-remix-lyrics>

⁴⁴ Beyoncé – Crazy in Love Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Beyonce-crazy-in-love-lyrics>

Out of these five top songs of 2004 three of them contain some grammatical error.

The first one is *Yeah!* by Usher where one of the verses goes as the following:

*"But what I do know is the way **she dance** makes shorty alright with me.*

*The way **she getting** low!"*⁴⁵

Because of the singular pronoun *she* that precedes *dance* the correct form would be *dances*.

Also, *the way she getting low* is grammatically incorrect because of the lack of the verb *be* in correct form. The correct version would be *the way she's getting low*.

Usher's other song in the top 5 of 2004 called *Burn* also contains some "mistakes".

"I know this is something that I gotta do

*But **that don't mean** I want to."*⁴⁶

Based on the subject-verb agreement the third person singular must be followed by the correct form of the verb. In this case it would be *doesn't mean*. The author had an obvious reason for using the incorrect one. *Don't* as a monosyllabic word fits better than the disyllabic *doesn't*.

Next song containing some grammatical mistake is *If I Ain't Got You* by Alicia Keys.

"Some people want it all

*But **I don't want nothing** at all."*⁴⁷

Alicia used double negation to fit the phrase into the rhythm pattern. *I don't want nothing* is a colloquial version of *I don't want anything* which has more syllables and would change the rhythm pattern.

⁴⁵ Usher – Yeah! Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Usher-yeah-lyrics>

⁴⁶ Lyrics for "Burn" by Usher. Song Meanings at Songfacts [online]. Copyright ©2018 Songfacts, LLC [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?lyrics=4094>

⁴⁷ Alicia Keys – If I Ain't Got You Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Alicia-keys-if-i-aint-got-you-lyrics>

In the song *The Way You Move* by Outkast are also some grammatically questionable parts but I am not going to review those since the song is in a music genre I do not work with in this thesis.

#Top 5 of 2005

The top 5 songs of 2005 were *We Belong Together* by Mariah Carey, *Hollaback Girl* by Gwen Stefani, *Let Me Love You* by Mario, *Since U Been Gone* by Kelly Clarkson and *1,2 Step* by Ciara and Missy Elliott.

In *Hollaback Girl* by Gwen Stefani the verse with a grammar error goes:

*"Few times I've been around that track
So it's not just gonna happen like that
'Cause I ain't no hollaback girl."*⁴⁸

Connecting *ain't* with the following *no* gives us unintentionally the opposite of the intended meaning. Instead of *I am no hollaback girl* this line says *I am not no hollaback girl*.

Gwen also left out the main verb in some repeated verses, such as *"this my shit, this my shit"*.

In Kelly Clarkson's *Since U Been Gone* the mistake appears in the title of the song. Besides the non-standard spelling of the second person you there is also lack of the auxiliary verb *have*.

The last song of the top 5 of 2005 containing a grammar error is Ciara's *1, 2, Step*.

*"It don't matter to me, we can dance slow
Whichever way the beat drops, our bodies will go."*⁴⁹

To shorten the amount of syllables Ciara used incorrectly the third person singular *don't*. The correct version would be *It doesn't matter to me*.

⁴⁸ Gwen Stefani – Hollaback Girl Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Gwen-stefani-hollaback-girl-lyrics>

⁴⁹ Ciara – 1, 2 Step Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Ciara-1-2-step-lyrics>

#Top 5 of 2006

In 2006 the top 5 songs according to Billboard magazine were *Bad Day* by Daniel Powter, *Temperature* by Sean Paul, *Promiscuous* by Nelly Furtado featuring Timbaland, *You're Beautiful* by James Blunt and *Hips Don't Lie* by Shakira featuring Wyclef Jean.

Temperature by Sean Paul contains many grammatically questionable phrases I am not going to discuss for the same reason I have explained earlier.

Grammar errors are present in the song *Promiscuous* by Nelly Furtado featuring Timbaland.

"Didn't think so

***How ya doing** young lady*

*The feeling that you gave me really drives me crazy."*⁵⁰

Lack of the plural verb *are* appeared multiple times thorough the song.

Same error appeared in Shakira's *Hips Don't Lie*.

"The way you move your body, girl (just move)

*And **everything so unexpected.**"*⁵¹

#Top 5 of 2007

The top 5 songs of 2007 were *Irreplaceable* by Beyoncé, *Umbrella* by Rihanna featuring Jay-Z, *The Sweet Escape* by Gwen Stefani featuring Akon, *Big Girls Don't Cry* by Fergie and *Buy U a Drank (Shawty Snappin')* by T-Pain featuring Yung Joc.

Beyoncé and her song *Irreplaceable* contains some grammatical mistakes such as the one in the following verse:

*"Because **you was** untrue*

*Rolling her around in the car that I bought you."*⁵²

⁵⁰ Nelly Furtado – Promiscuous Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Nelly-furtado-promiscuous-lyrics>

⁵¹ Lyrics for "Hips Don't Lie" by Shakira. Song Meanings at Songfacts [online]. Copyright ©2018 Songfacts, LLC [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?lyrics=6209>

⁵² Beyoncé – Irreplaceable Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Beyonce-irreplaceable-lyrics>

She used an incorrect preterite form in the second person singular. Instead of *you was* she should have used *you were*. Using *you were* would not affect anything in the song.

In the song *Big Girls Don't Cry* by Fergie the verse with an error goes:

*"And I'm gonna miss you like a **child misses their** blanket
But I've got to get a move on with my life."⁵³*

Fergie used an incorrect possessive pronoun. Instead of the third person plural she should have used the third person singular because of the singular subject *child*.

Buy U a Drank (Shawty Snappin') contains many slang expressions along with odd grammatical constructions I am not going to discuss in my thesis.

#Top 5 of 2008

In 2008 the top 5 songs were *Low* by Flo Rida featuring T-Pain, *Bleeding Love* by Leona Lewis, *No One* by Alicia Keys, *Lollipop* by Lil Wayne featuring Static Major and *Apologize* by Timbaland featuring One Republic.

In *Low* by Flo Rida and *Lollipop* by Lil Wayne are some "mistakes", for example double negatives or incorrect subject-verb agreement. According to the music genre of these songs I am not going to discuss any further details of the grammar errors.

#Top 5 of 2009

According to Billboard magazine's the top 5 songs of 2009's were *Boom Boom Pow* by The Black Eyed Peas, *Poker Face* by Lady Gaga, *Just Dance* by Lady Gaga featuring Colby O'Donis, *I Gotta Feeling* by The Black Eyed Peas and *Love Story* by Taylor Swift.

The song *Boom Boom Pow* by The Black Eyed Peas contains many odd sentence constructions mostly with the lack of a concrete meaning.

⁵³ Fergie – Big Girls Don't Cry (Personal) Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Fergie-big-girls-dont-cry-personal-lyrics>

*"I got **the that** rock and roll*

*That future flow."*⁵⁴

In this example that is unnecessarily preceded by the definite article, probably only to increase the number of syllables and to fit in the rhythm pattern. The correct solution would be to leave out the definite article and keep only *I got that rock and roll*.

The other song by The Black Eyed Peas in the top 5 of 2009 called *I Gotta Feeling* also contains grammar errors.

"Here we come, here we go, we gotta rock (Rock rock rock rock rock)

*Easy come, easy go, **now we on top** (Top top top top top)." ⁵⁵*

This example shows the lack of the verb *be* in the highlighted part. Adding *are* would not change the rhythm pattern or affect the rhyming. The phrase after correction would be *now we're on top*.

#Top 5 of 2010

The top 5 songs of 2010 according to Billboard magazine were *Tik Tok* by Kesha, *Need You Now* by *Lady Antebellum*, *Hey, Soul Sister* by *Train*, *California Gurls* by *Katy Perry featuring Snoop Dogg* and *OMG* by *Usher featuring will.i.am*.

Kesha uses the double negative in her song *Tik Tok*.

"Ain't got a care in a world, but got plenty of beer.

***Ain't got no money** in my pocket, but i'm already here."*⁵⁶

The second line says *ain't got no money* which according to the double negative means *have not got no money*. The intended meaning would be the exact opposite and Kesha's reason for using this phrase is to fit in the rhythm pattern of the song.

In *California Gurls* by *Katy Perry* also appear some grammatical errors.

⁵⁴ The Black Eyed Peas – Boom Boom Pow Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/The-black-eyed-peas-boom-boom-pow-lyrics>

⁵⁵ The Black Eyed Peas – I Gotta Feeling Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/The-black-eyed-peas-i-gotta-feeling-lyrics>

⁵⁶ Kesha – Tik Tok Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Kesha-tik-tok-lyrics>

*"The girl's a freak
She drive a jeep
And live on the beach."*⁵⁷

Because of the singular pronoun *she* that precedes *drive and live* the correct form would be *drives and lives*.

OMG by Usher featuring will.i.am also consists of some grammatically questionable parts.

*"This one got me whipped, just off one look, yep I fell in love
this one something special, this one just like dynamite."*⁵⁸

The second highlighted line is grammatically incorrect because of the lack of the verb *be* in the correct form. The correct version would be *this one is something special, this one is just like dynamite*.

#Top 5 of 2011

In 2011 the top 5 songs were *Rolling in the Deep* by Adele, *Party Rock Anthem* by LMFAO featuring Lauren Bennett and GoonRock, *Firework* by Katy Perry, *E.T.* by Katy Perry featuring Kanye West and *Give Me Everything* by Pitbull featuring Ne-Yo, Afrojack and Nayer.

In *Party Rock Anthem* LMFAO states:

*"In the club, party rock
Looking for your girl? She on my jock."*⁵⁹

The same mistake appears as in the last discussed song. *She on my jock* is grammatically incorrect because of the lack of the verb *be* in the correct form. The correct version would be *she is on my jock*.

⁵⁷ Katy Perry – California Gurls Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Katy-perry-california-gurls-lyrics>

⁵⁸ Usher – OMG Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Usher-omg-lyrics>

⁵⁹ LMFAO – Party Rock Anthem Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Lmfao-party-rock-anthem-lyrics>

The first verse of the song *E.T.* by Katy Perry says:

“Your touch magnetizing

*Feels like I'm floating, leaves my body glowing.”*⁶⁰

Again, the same mistake – the lack of the verb *be* in the correct form. The correct version would be *your touch is magnetizing* and it would not affect any aspect of the song.

I am not going to discuss the last song of this year's top 5 *Give Me Everything* by Pitbull because of its music genre I intentionally do not work with.

#Top 5 of 2012

In 2012 the top 5 songs according to Billboard magazine were *Somebody That I Used To Know* by Gotye featuring Kimbra, *Call Me Maybe* by Carly Rae Jepsen, *We Are Young* by Fun featuring Janelle Monáe, *Payphone* by Maroon 5 featuring Wiz Khalifa and *Lights* by Ellie Goulding.

In *Somebody That I Used to Know* the mistake appears in the title and then repeatedly throughout the song.

“I guess that I don't need that though

*Now you're just somebody **that** I used to know.”*⁶¹

Using *that* to explain some further details about a person is incorrect. To make this part grammatically correct I would suggest using *whom* instead of *that* because it can be used as a direct or indirect object, on the other hand *who* is used as the main noun or subject.

In *Payphone* by Maroon 5 the verse with a grammar error goes:

“So you talk about who you see at the top

*Or what **you could have saw** but sad to say it's over for.”*⁶²

⁶⁰ Katy Perry – E.T. Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Katy-perry-et-lyrics>

⁶¹ Gotye – Somebody That I Used To Know Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Gotye-somebody-that-i-used-to-know-lyrics>

⁶² Maroon 5 – Payphone Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Maroon-5-payphone-lyrics>

The second line says *you could have saw* which is grammatically incorrect. The correct past participle of *see* is *seen* which should have been used instead of *saw*. The correct version would be *Or what you could have **seen** but sad to say it's over for.*

#Top 5 of 2013

The top 5 songs of 2013 according to Billboard magazine were *Thrift Shop* by *Macklemore and Ryan Lewis featuring Wanz*, *Blurred Lines* by *Robin Thicke featuring T.I. and Pharrell Williams*, *Radioactive* by *Imagine Dragons*, *Harlem Shake* by *Baauer* and *Can't Hold Us* by *Macklemore and Ryan Lewis featuring Ray Dalton*.

In *Blurred Lines* by Robin Thicke featuring T.I. the verse with grammar error goes as the following:

*"What do they make dreams for
When you got **them** jeans on."*⁶³

I would consider using the personal pronoun *them* instead of possessive *their* a mistake. Using the correct form would not affect the song in any of its aspects.

I am not going to discuss the grammar errors in *Thrift Shop* and *Can't Hold Us* both by Macklemore because of a music genre I intentionally do not work with.

Also I am not going to review Harlem Shake because of the low amount of lyrics.

#Top 5 of 2014

In 2014 the top 5 songs were *Happy* by *Pharrell Williams*, *Dark Horse* by *Katy Perry featuring Juicy J*, *All of Me* by *John Legend*, *Fancy* by *Iggy Azalea featuring Charli XCX* and *Counting Stars* by *One Republic*.

In *Dark Horse* by Katy Perry the verse with a grammatical mistake goes:

*"She's a beast
I call her Karma*

⁶³ Robin Thicke – Blurred Lines Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Robin-thicke-blurred-lines-lyrics>

She eat your heart out

*Like Jeffrey Dahmer.”*⁶⁴

The lack of the modal verb *will* in the third line makes it grammatically incorrect. The correct version *she'll eat your heart out* would not threaten the rhyming or the rhythm.

In *Counting stars* the verse with a grammatical error goes:

“Lately I been, I been losing sleep

Dreaming about the things that we could be.”⁶⁵

The mistake appears due to the lack of the auxiliary verb *have*. The correct version would be *Lately I've been, I've been losing sleep*.

I am intentionally going to leave out *Fancy by Iggy Azalea featuring Charli XCX* of my reviews because of its music genre.

#Top 5 of 2015

In 2015 the top 5 songs according to Billboard magazine were *Uptown Funk* by Mark Ronson featuring Bruno Mars, *Thinking Out Loud* by Ed Sheeran, *See You Again* by Wiz Khalifa featuring Charlie Puth, *Trap Queen* by Fetty Wap and *Sugar* by Maroon 5.

In *Uptown Funk* by Mark Ronson featuring Bruno Mars the verse with a grammar error goes:

“If you sexy then flaunt it

If you freaky then own it.”⁶⁶

This example shows the lack of the verb *be* in the highlighted part. Adding *are* would not change the rhythm pattern or affect the rhyming. The phrase after correction would be *If you're sexy then flaunt it, if you're freaky then own it.*

⁶⁴ Katy Perry – Dark Horse Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Katy-perry-dark-horse-lyrics>

⁶⁵ OneRepublic – Counting Stars Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Onerepublic-counting-stars-lyrics>

⁶⁶ Mark Ronson – Uptown Funk Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Mark-ronson-uptown-funk-lyrics>

I am intentionally going to leave out *See You Again* by Wiz Khalifa and *Trap Queen* by Fetty Wap of my reviews because of its music genre.

#Top 5 of 2016

The top 5 songs of 2016 according to Billboard magazine were *Love Yourself* by Justin Bieber, *Sorry* by Justin Bieber, *One Dance* by Drake featuring Wizkid and Kyla, *Work* by Rihanna featuring Drake and *Stressed Out* by Twenty One Pilots.

In *Love Yourself* by Justin Bieber the grammar error appears in the pre-chorus of the song.

*“My **mama don't** like you and she likes everyone
And I never like to admit that I was wrong.”*⁶⁷

The author of this song made a mistake in the subject-verb agreement. Instead of the correct *doesn't* in the third person singular he used *don't* which helped him fit the phrase in the rhythm pattern of the whole song. We can state that using *don't* is with stylistic benefit to the song and that using the incorrect verb helped to reduce the number of syllables.

One Dance by Drake contains the following error:

*“You know that I don't play
Streets not safe.”*⁶⁸

This example shows the lack of the verb *be* in the highlighted part. Adding *are* would slightly affect the rhythm therefore I suppose it was left out intentionally. The correct version would be *streets are not safe*.

In Rihanna's song *Work* the grammar error appears in the beginning of the song:

*“Work, work, work, work, work, work
You see me I be work, work, work, work, work, work.”*⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Justin Bieber – Love Yourself Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Justin-bieber-love-yourself-lyrics>

⁶⁸ Drake – One Dance Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Drake-one-dance-lyrics>

⁶⁹ Rihanna – Work Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Rihanna-work-lyrics>

This example has multiple solutions. We can either add *-ing* form to *work* plus the future tense *will* or adding the future tense *will* plus preposition *at* before *work*. The two possible versions would be *You see me I'll be working* or *You see me I'll be at work*. The second one seems more suitable to me since we keep the original word *work* which appears in the title of the song.

#Top 5 of 2017

Last year's top 5 songs according to Billboard magazine were *Shape of You* by Ed Sheeran, *Despacito* by Luis Fonsi and Daddy Yankee featuring Justin Bieber, *That's What I Like* by Bruno Mars, *Humble* by Kendrick Lamar and *Something Just Like This* by The Chainsmokers and Coldplay.

In Bruno Mars's *That's What I Like* appears a double negative.

*"I will never make a promise that I can't keep
I promise that your smile **ain't gon' never** leave."*⁷⁰

I ain't never works as a double negative. The meaning according to the context of the song is the exact opposite of *I am not going to never leave*. In this case I would consider using *ain't + never* to intensify the negativity and therefore I would not take this phrase as its positive inversion after cancelling the double negativity but as *I am never going to leave*.

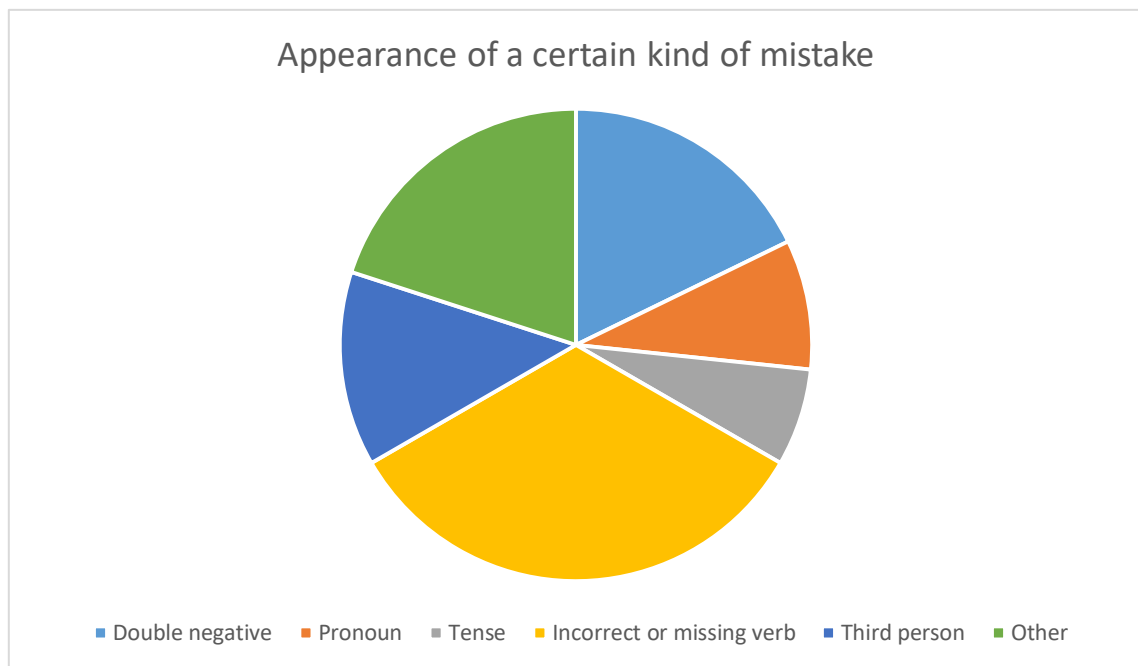
I am not going to discuss the grammar errors in the song *Humble* by Kendrick Lamar because of its music genre and *Despacito* by Luis Fonsi because the song is in Spanish.

⁷⁰ Bruno Mars – That's What I Like Lyrics | Genius Lyrics. Genius | Song Lyrics & Knowledge [online]. Copyright © 2018 Genius Media Group Inc. [cit. 22.04.2018]. Dostupné z: <https://genius.com/Bruno-mars-thats-what-i-like-lyrics>

IV. CONCLUSION

As I have stated in the previous chapter, large amount of the most successful songs worldwide contains some grammatical errors. The following diagram shows the most common mistakes in reviewed songs.

Out of 135 top 5 songs from 1990 until 2017 were 116 of them suitable for my reviews. The rest of them were mostly rap or hip hop and contained many slang expressions, dialects and grammatically questionable parts.



The most common mistake was the lack of the main or auxiliary verb. Using contracted forms of particular verbs would not change the rhythm pattern, therefore these mistakes are not in most cases beneficial to the song, they do not increase or reduce the number of syllables.

The second most common mistake was the double negative. This kind of mistake is the most controversial one because in many cases the authors used the double negative on purpose to support the negation. It is necessary to understand the context of the song properly to be able to distinguish whether the mistake was made on purpose or unintentionally.

The third most frequent mistake occurrence was in the subject-verb agreement. This mistake can be beneficial in case the incorrect version increases or reduces the number of syllables which is possible for example in substituting *doesn't* for *don't*. If the

mistake appears in omitting –s in verbs in the third person singular then it does not benefit the song.

Grammar errors also appeared in the past tenses which was mostly beneficial to the song in terms of continuing the rhyme or keeping the rhythm pattern.

On the other hand, using for example the personal pronoun *them* instead of possessive pronoun *their* was not beneficial in any of the reviewed songs in any of their aspects.

Other discussed mistakes were for example the unexplainable use of definite and indefinite article or using an adjectival form instead of adverbial form.

Besides the certain kinds of mistakes in songs I have come to a surprising conclusion in terms of more frequent occurrence of grammar errors starting in 2000. I add this to the fact that rap and hip hop songs containing many questionable parts and also simplification of the lyrics in other music genres was getting more popular. Simplification leads to omitting important words which is mostly considered a mistake.

According to the fact that people can vote for their favourite songs from all over the world in Billboard's magazine and many of the voters are not English native speakers we can state that mistakes in songs are not a major factor influencing the choice.

V. SUMMARY

While studying different types of mistakes in lyrics in popular songs I have found out that appearance of some grammatical errors is not rare at all. I divided the most frequent mistakes into their own chapters. Grammatical rules are explained in each chapter, saying why the mistakes are being made and I showed the mistakes in some actual songs.

To be able to characterize why the mistakes appear in songs it is important to distinguish whether the mistakes are made on purpose to be beneficial to the song, such as reducing or increasing the number of syllables to fit the lyrics in the rhythm pattern properly or without any benefit to the song. In this case we talk about mistakes made by accident or generally about errors that do not help or threaten the rhyming, rhythm or meaning of the song and the correct versions would work just fine in these aspects.

I dedicated the beginning of my thesis to songwriting in general. I explained the difference between choosing to start with creating the melody and then fitting the lyrics in, which has some boundaries in terms of phrasing and limitations in terms of the number of syllables and between writing the lyrics first and then creating the melody and harmony. This order has its disadvantages as well. The main disadvantage is having no limits in the number of syllables which may lead to an effort to fit as many thoughts in the verse as possible.

Throughout my thesis I have worked mostly with pop, rock, indie, R'n'B and folk songs and I intentionally left out rap and hip hop. These two music genres mostly contain slang and expressions ordinary to a certain ethnic group. The authors of these songs used double negatives very often. Sometimes to support the negation or the non-word *ain't*.

After finishing my practical part where I have examined more than 130 most successful songs in the past 27 years I can state that surprisingly some kind of grammatically questionable phrase or grammatical errors appear in almost 41% of them.

VI. ZÁVĚR

Při studování různých typů chyb v textech populárních písní jsem došla ke zjištění, že výskyt gramatických chyb není vůbec neobvyklý. Nejčastěji se objevované chyby jsem rozdělila do jednotlivých kapitol. V každé z kapitol jsem následně vysvětlila danou gramatiku, proč k chybám dochází a jejich výskyt ukázala na konkrétních písních.

K tomu, abychom byli schopni určit, proč k chybám dochází, je důležité rozlišit, zdali k chybě dochází úmyslně, aby určitým způsobem písni přispěla, jako například při nutnosti redukce nebo naopak zvýšení počtu slabik pro zapadnutí do rytmu nebo nemá pro píseň žádný přínos. V tomto případě hovoříme o chybách vytvořené omylem nebo v zásadě jako o chybách, které nepomáhají ale ani neohrožují rýmování, rytmus nebo význam písně a v těchto ohledech fungují úplně stejně jako gramaticky správné verze.

Začátek této práce jsem věnovala psaní textů obecně. Vysvětlila jsem zde rozdíl v postupu, pokud autor začíná nejprve melodií a poté do ní zapracovává text. V tomto případě se musí počítat s určitými hranicemi, které se týkají frázování a také s limity v počtu slabik. Jako druhá možnost je začínat nejprve s psáním textu, ke kterému se následně vymýšlí melodie. I tento postup má své nevýhody. Jako hlavní nevýhodu bych označila absenci limitu v počtu slabik, což může vést až ke snaze umístit do slok co nejvíce myšlenek.

Ve své práci jsem pracovala převážně s popovými, rockovými, R'n'B, indie a folkovými písněmi a úmyslně jsem vynechávala rapové a hip hopové texty. Tyto dva hudební žánry velmi často obsahují slang a výrazy běžné například pro určitou etnickou skupinu. Autoři těchto textů se často dopouštějí chyb v negaci s úmyslem negaci pouze podpořit, a ne zcela změnit její význam nebo v užívání slova *ain't*.

Po dokončení praktické části, kde jsem prozkoumala více než 130 textů nejúspěšnějších písní za posledních 27 let, mohu říci, že gramaticky sporné fráze se objevují ve zhruba 41 % z nich.

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