



The Purpose of Nonce Words in English Music Lyrics

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Introduction

Nonce words are words invented and used for a particular occasion (Arnold 55)

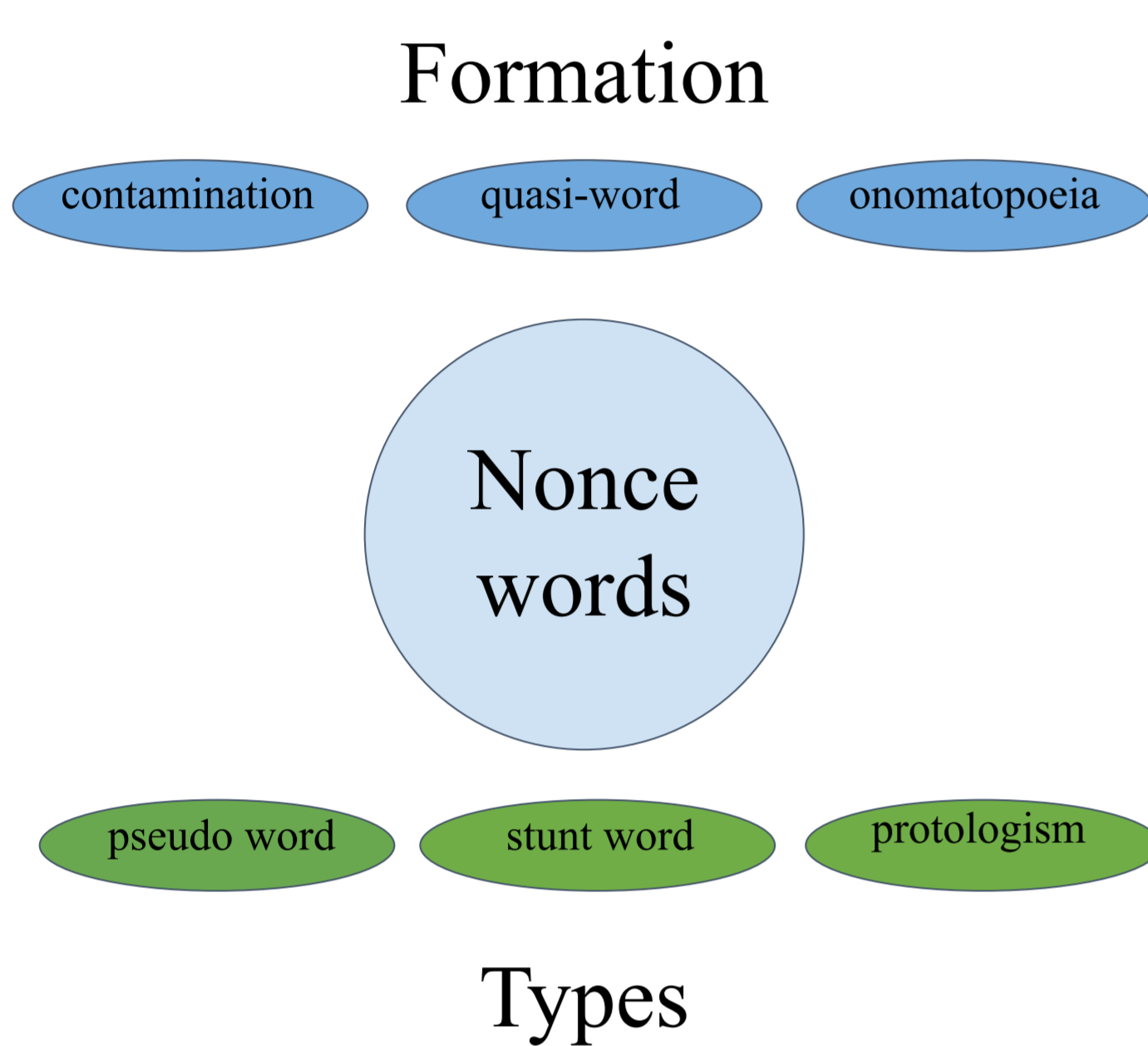


Figure 2. Nonce words classifications

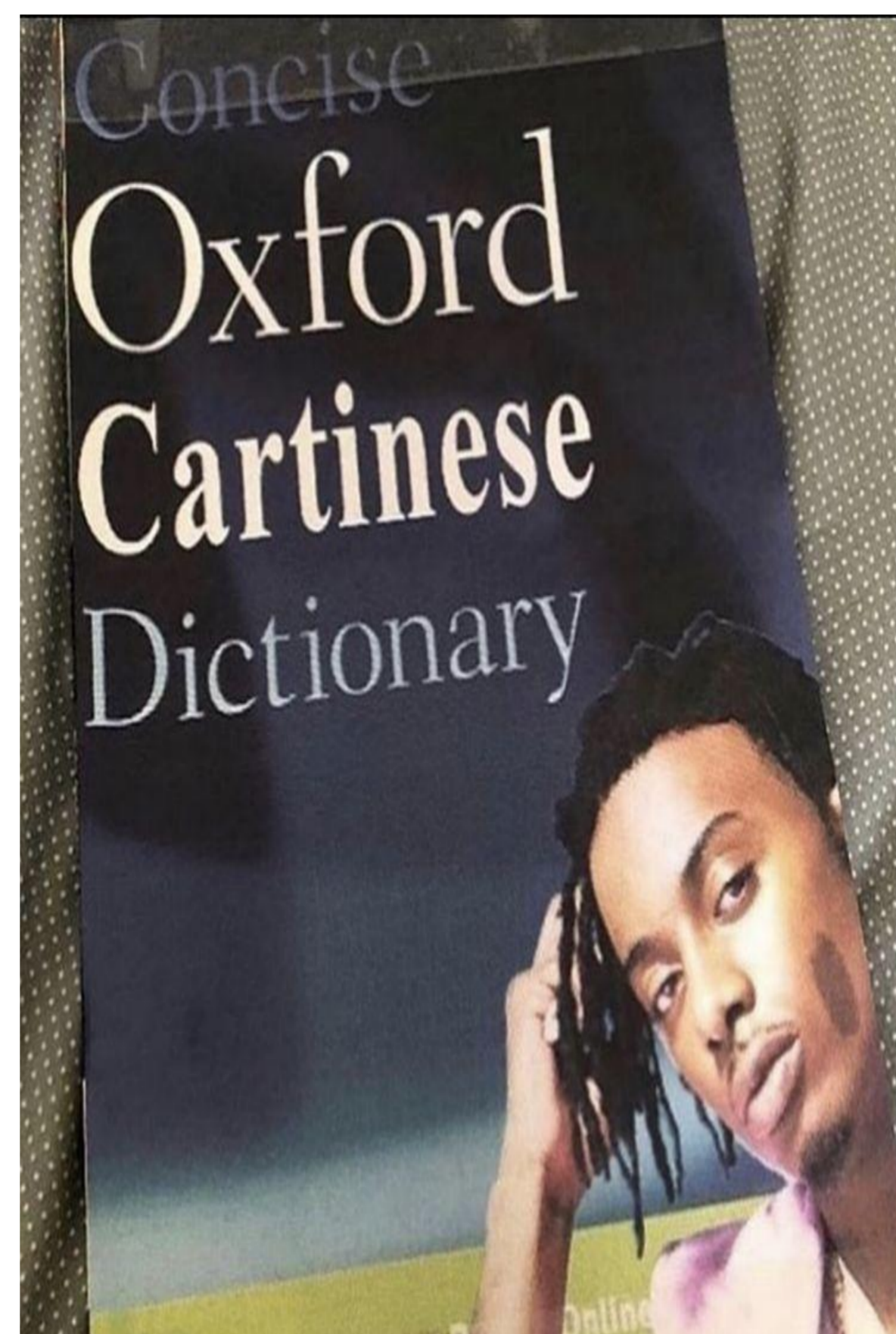


Figure 1. Specific nonce words dictionary

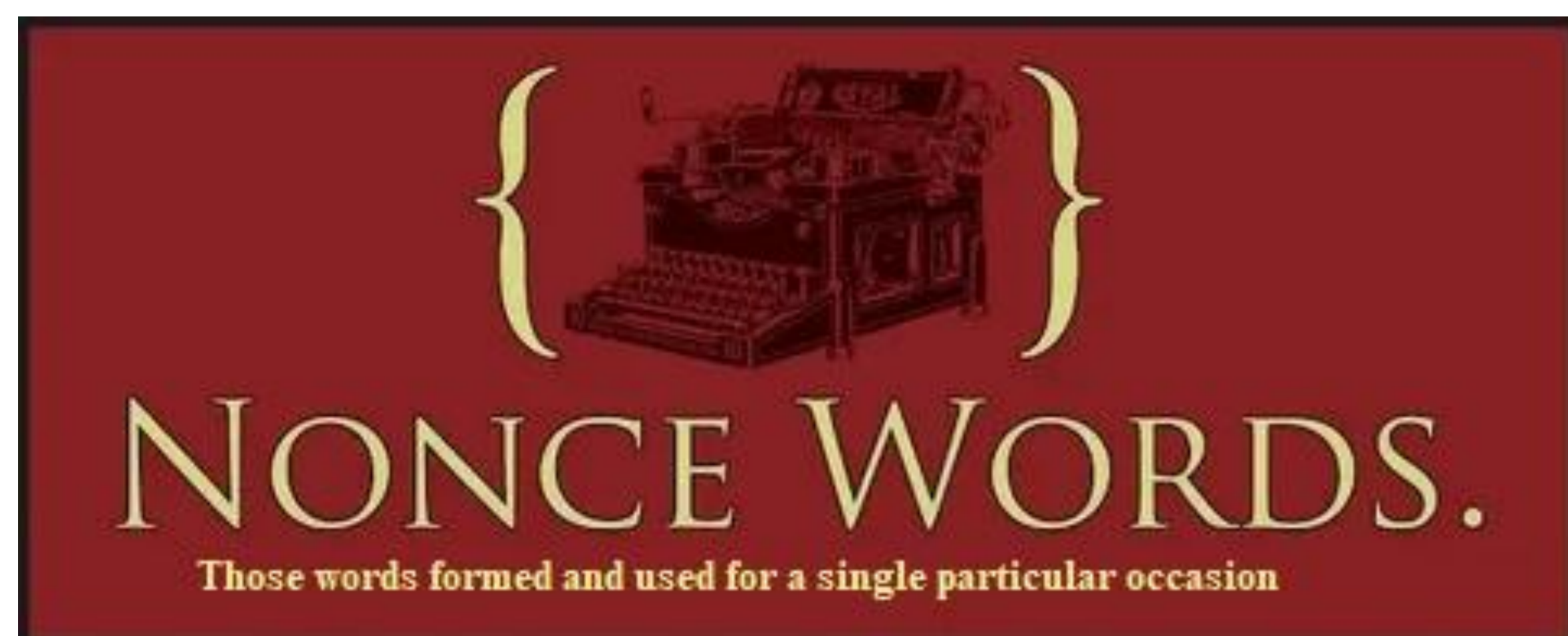


Figure 3. Nonce word nomination

Research goal

To evaluate the role of nonce words in lyrics and reveal whether nonce words were coined by accident or on purpose.

Research questions

- What are the types of nonce words?
- What are the types of nonce words?
- Why songwriters coin nonce words?

Examples



Nonce words	Song	Formation	Types	Streams
discriminize	"Pick Up the Phone" - Quavo	contamination	pseudo word/ stunt word	761 167 092
swagonometry	"Best Friend" - Young Thug	contamination	protologism	165 646 052
residentials	"CARNIVAL" - Playboy Carti	quasi-word	pseudo word	641 679 059
apologin(g)	"Can't Tell Me Nothing" - Kanye West	contamination	pseudo word/ stunt word	675 199 800
accessorary	"Tempo" - Lizzo	contamination	pseudo word/ stunt	183 254 524

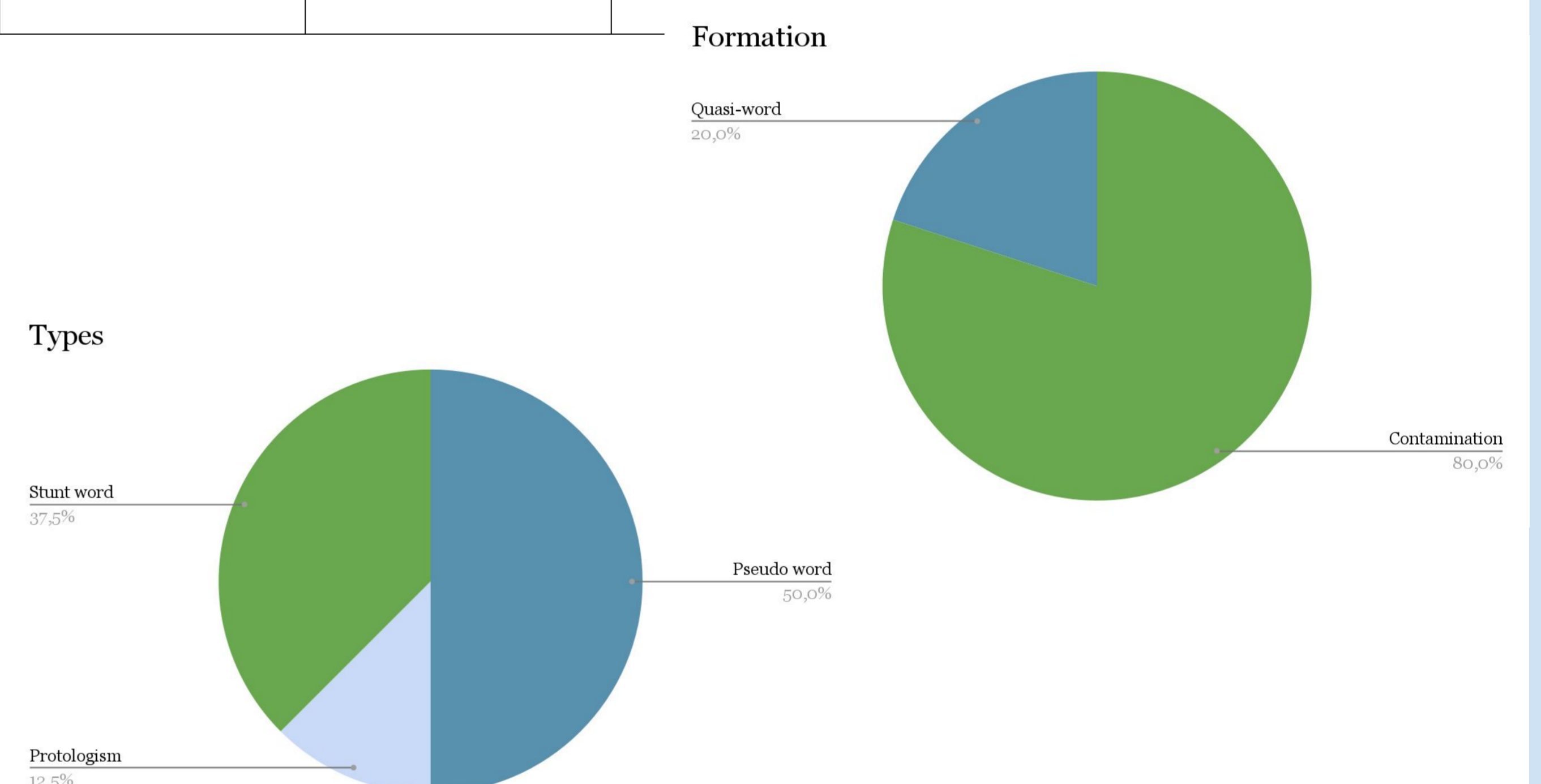


Figure 4. Nonce words frequency

Key results

According to the research, it was revealed that in most cases nonce words are coined purposefully in order to preserve a rhythm of a particular segment of the song. Moreover, some nonce words were introduced in order to emphasize particular ideas. To sum up, nonce words do have a valuable role in lyrics.

References

